

MONEY VS. LOVE.

BY ENNA DUVAL.

"Why do some women present an attitude of cold fashionableness to a world which they might win by their sweetness and inspire by their virtue? Their light footsteps ought to touch the earth, only to mark the track which leads to Heaven.—MADAME DE LA MOTTE FOUQUE.

"WILL you come into the library after a while, Ellen? I wish to talk with you upon a subject that concerns you particularly," said Mr. Wilmer to his niece, one day as he rose from the dinner-table, and as he turned to leave the room, he smiled very roguishly. His niece, a beautiful but cold looking girl, lifted up her large, dark eyes as he made the request, and although her lips uttered a quiet "certainly, sir," her face wore an expression of surprise and inquiry; no conscious blush flitted over her cheek, only those brilliant eyes were expanded to their utmost. After the door closed on her uncle, she sat in silence, as if meditating on what could possibly be the subject of this approaching interview; but the meditation evidently gave her but little uneasiness, for she continued dropping nuts into her wine-glass in as *nonchalant* a manner as if the affair was scarcely worth the trouble of wonder. Her aunt contemplated her earnestly, and was just about breaking this indifferent silence, when a servant informed her that Mr. Wilmer requested she would accompany Miss Ellen into the library.

"Your uncle evidently intends holding a consultation, Nelly," said Mrs. Wilmer, and despatching her little darlings with their nurses to the nursery, promising to be with them soon, she with her silent niece repaired to the library. The library, a cosy as well as a luxurious apartment, was Mr. Wilmer's after dinner retreat, where after a long day's industrious attention to business, he always sought and found relaxation and pleasure in the society of his gentle wife, and with his books and papers. As they entered this room, Mr. Wilmer rose to greet them with a happy, smiling face, and taking his wife's hand, he said, as he seated himself beside her—

"Edith, a little circumstance occurred this morning that took my memory back many years—to the happy days of our courtship when I wooed and won you, my own, darling wife."

A faint blush passed over the still lovely face of the wife as she returned with beaming, tearful eyes, and trembling hand his fond look and caress.

"Nelly, dear," said Mr. Wilmer to his niece, who stood by the library table turning over a book of prints. "We may as well come to the point at once—unconscious as you pretend to be, you surely suspect the subject of our interview?"

"Upon my word I do not," replied the beautiful girl, and suppressing a yawn, she sank with graceful indifference into a soft cushioned library chair that extended its tempting arms beside her, saying—"you are too good-natured, too generously indulgent to scold me about my bills, which I very much fear are sometimes a wee bit extravagant for a girl possessing only

a poor, little ten thousand for a portion. I believe you think me dissipated also, for you looked a little surprised at the thought of ten parties in a week, the other day, not counting, you said, the operas and concerts I go to. But surely you do not think that of sufficient consequence to read me a lecture in family conclave about? *En verite*, I shall do so vulgar a thing as to display an eager curiosity if you do not unravel the mystery and tell me my misdemeanor."

"Nothing more nor less than appropriating a young gentleman's heart," replied her uncle, laughing, "but as you have given your own in return I see no serious crime in it."

"I am happy to be able to say," answered Miss Wilmer, gazing with her full, brilliant eyes calmly and coldly on her aunt and uncle, "that my heart is still safe in my own possession."

"That is very strange," said her uncle, changing his tone of *badinage* to a more serious one. "Clement Rogers asked my consent to his marriage with you this morning, which I freely gave, for I do not know a more worthy or excellent young man. I have noticed his attentions to you, Ellen, with much pleasure, and to no other that we know would I so freely give my brother's child, dear to me as my own, as I would to him. Yes, Edith," continued Mr. Wilmer, pressing his lips to his wife's clear, fair brow, as with her head leaning affectionately on his shoulder, she looked up into his face—"that young man's earnest, enthusiastic expressions, took me back to the days of our betrothal; blessed days were they, dear one, but not so blessed even in all their bright intoxicating blissfulness as these happy years we have had since"—then turning to his niece, he said as he noticed the haughty flash of her eye, and the disdainful curl of her beautiful mouth—"my dear Ellen, I fear that in an idle spirit of *coquetric*, which I have thought you too proud to indulge in, you must have given Mr. Rogers encouragement, for he seemed most sure of your consent. I am heartily sorry for him, for he is an excellent fellow, and worthy of any woman."

"Yes," said Ellen Wilmer, with a calm, contemptuous smile, and a cool shrug of her pretty shoulders; "Mr. Rogers, with a fortune, might be worth accepting, but Clement Rogers, poor as he is, is presuming when he thinks of marrying."

"Nelly, Nelly," exclaimed her uncle, "Rogers bids fair to be a wealthy man. When I addressed your aunt my prospects were anything but bright, and when we married it was with only the salary of a clerkship, which brought us but seven hundred dollars a year."

"You were very imprudent, is all I have to say,"

repelled Ellen, swinging her glittering *viniaigrette* carelessly to and fro.

"We were very happy," said Mrs. Wilmer, in low, feeling tones, "as happy as with our present large income; were we not, dearest?"

Her husband replied by a fond, earnest caress, then turning to his niece, said—"but how am I to understand all this mystery, Ellen? To my certain knowledge Rogers has been your attendant this year past. You have permitted him to accompany you to every ball, opera and concert—you have accepted his flowers and little offerings, which any one could have known were prompted by love, thus silently giving him every encouragement. I must say, Ellen, you have shown little heart in this affair."

"I am sorry," replied his niece, quietly, "that you regard my conduct in so harsh a light. Mr. Rogers has offered me no more attention than have a dozen other young gentlemen. As he was rather more agreeable than the other dozen, I have given him the preference, thinking myself quite safe, for as he must have known my expensive tastes, he surely could not think of indulging in such a luxury as Ellen Wilmer for a wife. It has turned out otherwise, I find, rather unpleasantly for him, foolish fellow. I am astonished, however, that he should have presumed upon speaking to you without informing me of his intention. As I suppose you have no other business with me, my dear uncle," she added, rising from her seat, "I must now run away, for my watch tells me it is after eight o'clock, which will give me but a little time for the elaborate toilette I have planned for Mrs. Rowland's ball; and I have promised to meet Mrs. Lisle at Miss Bentley's *musical* first, where we are to spend an hour by promise. By the way, dear aunt, you are so becomingly dressed this evening, do you purpose being my chaperone, or am I to be left to the tender mercies of my merry widow friend, who tries to steal all my beaux from me?"

"Mrs. Lisle will not come off conqueror, I am certain, Nelly," replied her aunt, "when she endeavors to enter the lists with you; although I must confess you are a well matched pair. But if you will run the giddy round of a fashionable season, I fear you will have to be left to the tender mercies of any married lady you can find. I prize the happiness of my home too much to waste my husband's hours of leisure in idle gaiety. I only wish I could convince you of the unalloyed happiness to be found——"

"In domestic felicity," interrupted her niece. "Well, I very much fear I shall never settle down to the Darby and Joan state of life you lead my poor Aunt Mary—so good night—every one to their taste, you know," and she glided gracefully toward the door.

"Stay, Ellen," said her uncle, and Ellen Wilmer's foot lingered at the library door—"is it possible," he asked, "so lovely a looking creature as you are can be without a heart?"

"I have a heart, my dear uncle," she replied, with a bland smile, "but luckily I have a head, which tells me that I never would be happy as a poor man's wife, and that I would rather live and die unmarried than marry other than a man of fortune."

"Do you think riches bring happiness, Ellen?" said her aunt.

"Riches procure luxuries and indulgences which are as necessary as breath to my existence," replied the niece.

"The day may come, Ellen," remarked her uncle, seriously, "when the pure, disinterested love which Clement Rogers now offers, may be of more value than all the wealth in the world to you." His niece bowed her beautiful head, and passed quietly from the room, leaving her aunt and uncle to lament over her blind heartlessness, and to sympathize with Clement Rogers. With a heart filled with rebellious and worldly thoughts, Ellen Wilmer proceeded up the broad staircase. As she entered her dressing-room where her maid stood ready to receive her—she paused for a few moments and regarded the sight before her; then with a quiet, cold smile she prepared for her toilette. What thoughts passed in her mind as she gazed on the brilliant robe of pink tissue and silver that hung trembling with every breath on the dress-stand, and the sparkling gems that glittered in her *ecrin* on the toilette table? Selfish, heartless thoughts were they that caused that smile—she said to herself, "ah, money is necessary to me; I am young and beautiful; I love society and admiration; I must be rich." But as she sat under the hands of her dressing maid, who was skilfully braiding those long, dark tresses, and mingling fragrant, rich colored flowers with the curls, a more gentle expression stole over Ellen Wilmer's face, which made her beauty seem Heavenly. The luxurious odor from the flowers brought a remembrance to her mind of the low, breathing words of Clement Rogers, when a few nights before, at a gay ball, they had wandered into the conservatory adjoining the ball-room; where in its dim light he had poured out unchecked his earnest love. Those flowers seemed to have spirit tones in their fragrance, they recalled those moments to her, and she remembered the blissful rapture with which she had listened to his words:—but the Heavenly radiance passed from her face, and a bitter look as of deep anguish and heart struggling spread over it for an instant—then it remained cold and passionless as a statue. The recollection that she had given encouragement to her lover, and the thought of how dear he was to her, caused the look of anguish; but her good spirit was weakened by frequent combats with the worldly evil spirit, and in the one short struggle it sank overpowered; and when Ellen Wilmer, at the close of her toilette, gazed at her brilliant form in the cheval glass, the proud, haughty look of satisfaction expressed in her lovely face told that the evil spirit reigned triumphant. A knock at the door summoned the admiring maid from her beautiful young mistress; presently she returned bearing two bouquets, with a note accompanying each. One was magnificent—the cold, queenly japonicas and brilliant roses were clasped together in a splendid bouquet holder, and an embossed note begged her acceptance "of the trifle," the signature of which told her it was from Mr. Bentley, a rich widower, the father of the Miss Bentley, at whose *musical* she was to spend part of the evening. The other, a modest cluster of

sweet fragrant English violets, mignonette, heliotrope and the tea roses, confined by a simple ribbon, and accompanied by a tiny note filled with the wildest expressions of worship, was thrown unheeded aside, while the ring of the costly jeweled bouquet holder was quietly slipped over her tapering finger with a calm smile of satisfaction; then, after being enveloped by her maid in her warm furred mantle, she took her seat in her uncle's carriage, which soon whirled her to the magnificent mansion of Mr. Bentley.

Let us take a peep at the library, dear reader, before we follow that cold coquette in her giddy round—just for a few moments. There we shall see Mrs. Wilmer seated beside her husband, her head still resting on his shoulder, while his arm draws her fondly to him. Tears are in their eyes, but blessed Heavenly tears are they; together had they visited the nursery, and bending over their children's pillows, had lavished many a good night caress on these two little ones, spared to them out of the band of cherubs given to them years before. Happy as Mr. and Mrs. Wilmer had been in each other's love, sorrow had hung its heavy cloud over their life. One after another of their children had they been called to part with, and it was the recollection of these lost dear ones that brought tears to their eyes; but blessed tears I repeat were they, for by them they were drawn nearer to each other and Heaven in spirit.

Long after midnight, Ellen Wilmer stood again before the large mirror in her dressing-room: she started with affright at the pallid countenance reflected in it, and her voice as she spoke to her sleepy maid sounded hollow and broken; and yet the dream of her ambition was realized—her wildest, most extravagant hopes were gratified. That night Mr. Bentley had offered himself to her, and she had returned home his promised bride. But a sadder scene greeted her in the close of the evening. After she had shone at her future daughter-in-law's *musical*, accompanied by Mr. Bentley she made her appearance at Mrs. Rowland's grand ball, where she received many congratulations, but secret thoughts of envy and hate upon her evident success; so devoted was Mr. Bentley, so unguarded in his manner, that to every eye it was apparent she was the *fiancée* of the rich widower. Once in the promenade she encountered the half reproachful, half stern look of Clement Rogers, from which she recoiled, but her ambitious worldly desires soon quieted all remorse. As Mr. Bentley deposited her carefully in her carriage and bade her good night, he asked permission to wait on her uncle the next morning—the light of the street lamp shone on her old lover as he leaned earnestly to hear her assenting reply—and she could not help contrasting Clement Rogers' handsome face and fine form with the stooping figure, grey head, and withered features of her future husband; and as the carriage door closed she sank back on the cushions sick at heart. When she reached her uncle's door a person pushed the footman aside to assist her in alighting; surprised she looked at the stranger, and to her dismay she recognized in him Clement Rogers.

"Let me see you one instant," he said, as the servant opened the hall door. "I will not detain

you long—and, if you wish, I will never see you again."

Spell-bound she followed him into the drawing-room, and with a chilled heart listened to the passionate burst of inquiry and entreaty that poured from his lips. She could not speak, but sat like a statue, passionless; at last by a fearful struggle she broke the icy band that seemed to fetter her, and uttered in low tones that went like death bolts to her lover's heart.

"I have promised this evening to be Mr. Bentley's wife. I cannot bring myself to contend with comparative poverty and privation. As your wife, Clement, I should be miserable, and make you unhappy; for love alone I fear would not be all sufficing. We must forget the past—in future let us, however, be friends"—and she extended her hand to him, which he indignantly refused, exclaiming—

"No, Ellen Wilmer, you have sold yourself for money. My earnest, devoted love would have been sufficient to a heart pure and true as I have deemed yours; but heartless, cold and selfish are you—and neither friendship nor love can I entertain for you hereafter. God forgive you for your heartless conduct," and thus they parted.

"Have you weighed the disagreeabilities of this marriage, Ellen?" inquired Mr. Wilmer of his niece on the following day. The same trio were collected in the library as had met there on the preceding evening. Mr. Wilmer and his wife looked distressed, while she, the haughty Ellen, sat in the luxurious chair, swaying indifferently to and fro her fragrant *rinviagrette*. A close observer, however, might have detected the unnatural paleness of her cheek, and the firm, square expression of her delicate lips—but the cold, calm voice was the same, and not a tremble in its tones told of the struggle that was going on in her young heart; but worldly selfishness was stifling fast its wallings and love entreaties.

"Disagreeables attend agreeables, my dear uncle, as shadows balance lights," she replied; "I cannot, of course, expect to be exempt from annoyances."

"My dear Ellen," said her aunt, entreatingly, "is marriage, that holy sacrament, a mere matter of fact business to you?" Ellen shrugged her shoulders gently, but remained silent. Mr. Wilmer, who was walking impatiently up and down the library, at last stopped before his niece, and said—

"But is it not, my child, excessively disagreeable to you to bind yourself for better or for worse to a man old enough to be your father? In ten years' time Mr. Bentley will be an old man, possibly very infirm, while you, then only twenty-eight, will still be a young woman, fond of life and all its excitements—how will you be able to endure, with your disposition and without love to cheer you, the seclusion and self-denial that propriety will demand of you? Then your husband may lose his immense fortune—can you endure poverty with one indifferent to you? All these contingencies should be taken into consideration."

"With regard to Mr. Bentley's age and probable infirmity, my dear sir," replied his niece, "my ideas of propriety may not be so exacting as yours; but," continued she, leaning forward slightly agitated—

"your last probability is really a disagreeable I would not contend with. Poverty cannot endure with any one. I would authorise you immediately to reject Mr. Bentley's offers if I thought his affairs were in a precarious condition, and he unable to make the advantageous settlement which he has arranged to do, and which is so necessary for a second wife entering a family of children not her own. Is he not wealthy? I have heard you speak of him as a man possessing a princely fortune."

"Mr. Bentley is still in business," replied her uncle; "a fortune even large as his, when subjected to the reverses of trade, may be swept off in an instant."

"But at present you think him wealthy, and whatever pecuniary arrangements he makes for me will be secure?" inquired his niece, eagerly.

"Perfectly so," answered Mr. Wilmer. "I had no idea, however, that Mr. Bentley had been managed by you so skilfully. Nelly, Nelly, you are too mercenary for a young, pretty girl to be. It is true, Mr. Bentley is at the head of the first mercantile establishment in our country, and at present commands a princely income. But is wealth the only qualification you require?"

"Certainly that is all I desire—wealth—then position—the first gives the last, at least it will to me, but I must confess you quite alarmed me."

"Ellen, Ellen," exclaimed her uncle, in as severe tones as his mild nature would allow. "Is it possible one so young, so beautiful, so proud, can stoop to sell herself for money!"

These words brought to Ellen's mind her last interview with Clement Rogers, and a convulsive shudder passed over her whole frame. For an instant her better nature was strong—alas! it was but the death struggle. The library door opened, and a servant handed to her a richly ornamented box with Mr. Bentley's compliments.

She opened it, and saw an exquisite bouquet of flowers, but the slender stems were confined by the glittering links of a costly necklace and bracelets, and as she lifted the flowers from the spotless cotton on which they rested, a magnificent ring rolled from among the soft, fragrant leaves. The gift was admired. Then Ellen arose to go to her room, saying—

"I promised to accompany the Bentleys to the opera this evening; I fear I shall keep them waiting."

"And, Ellen," said her uncle, drawing her to him as she was about leaving them, "you have fully resolved upon marrying this old gentleman?"

"Fully and decidedly," replied his niece, as she quietly held aside the bouquet with its glittering pendants, to avoid its being crushed by the kind caress which she only apparently endured without response. Then, with her accustomed gracefulness, she left the room.

The whole fashionable world was thrown into a commotion by the announcement of the approaching marriage of Mr. Bentley to Miss Wilmer. Some commented upon it ill-naturedly, others, in a worldly manner, pronounced her a sensible, lucky girl. The splendid preparations for the wedding seemed a seventh wonder. The children of Mr. Bentley cared

little about it. His daughter, Jessie, was a silly, fashionable girl, who was delighted that her father had chosen for a wife one who would encourage her in her extravagances and folly; while the younger children could not think that the beautiful, musical voiced Miss Wilmer would ever be "that horrid thing, a cross step-mother," which their nurses had described to them. Clement Rogers alone suffered, and at last, unable to bear the sight of the brilliant bride and her heartless splendor, he embraced an opportunity which offered of entering into a business which required his residence at Canton.

A few weeks passed by, and Ellen Wilmer stood in her gorgeous bridal dress at the altar with Mr. Bentley. Gay friends surrounded her, and on all sides were murmurs of admiration which caused her heart to swell up with exultation. Pale and passionless she stood, but calm; and only when her uncle folded her in his arms, and she received her gentle aunt Mary's caress, and heard their whispered ejaculation, "God grant, my child, you may be happy!" only then did she display any emotion; a convulsive sob was all, however, and that was soon stifled; and after receiving the congratulations of her friends, she entered her carriage, which was to bear her to the princely home she had purchased by the sacrifice of love.

Years rolled away, and, during all that time, the rich Mrs. Bentley was the acknowledged leader of fashion. No parties so splendid as hers—no establishment could vie with hers in elegance, and no wardrobe in magnificence—some envious ones whispered that the old husband had grown cross and infirm, and that the cold, haughty look that Mrs. Bentley's face invariably wore, was produced by dissatisfaction at home. The real truth was, Mrs. Bentley found that wealth did not bring happiness. For the first few years of her marriage, when all her splendor was new to her, and she was the idol of her doting old husband, she fancied that riches was all she required. She drank the intoxicating cup of pleasure with eagerness, until it palled her; and when ten years passed by, and her husband felt age increasing his infirmities, and exacted more of her attendance at home, and the luxuries that surrounded her had lost their novelty, life became wearisome to her, and she felt heart-sick. Having no children, she deplored the want of companionship. Her husband's children were all boys, excepting the eldest one, who had long since married, and was a silly, tedious woman; the affection of her husband's sons she had never sought—indeed, they were indifferent in mind, and seemed only to possess two ideas, to become young men of fashion and spend as much money as they could. In order to silence the cravings of her spirit, she persuaded her childish husband to take her to Europe, but after a few listless years she returned more lonely and dispirited than before. The world wearied her; and her home had no attractions, for there she only saw her peevish, cross husband, who had never possessed her love. A more striking object of splendid misery could not be found anywhere than Ellen Wilmer, ten years after the marriage which she had fancied was to produce every happiness for her.

"Do you remember your old beau, Clement Rogers?" said her friend, the still flirting widow, Mrs. Lisle, one morning, after Ellen had returned from her sojourn in Europe. "He has come back from China with a handsome fortune and a beautiful wife."

"Some East India belle, with a skin as yellow as her rupees," said Ellen, with a sarcastic laugh.

"No, indeed," exclaimed another visitor; she is a lovely, fair English girl, the daughter of an East India merchant, of immense fortune, at Canton. She has been making quite a sensation, dear Mrs. Bentley, among *us* this season. You will meet her at Mrs. Carlton's to-night."

Then one told of the splendid house, magnificent furniture, and elegant equipage of this beautiful Mrs. Rogers, and another described with great *gusto* her diamonds, until Ellen was heartily wearied with the subject, and to change it, turned to some young girls who were nervously going through the morning calls of their first season, and talked to them of the ball of the evening. It had the desired effect, for they were wild almost with enchantment at the prospect of a large ball, then still more so that the *distingue* Mrs. Bentley should consider them of sufficient consequence to notice them, and with the aid of some young gentleman she got up a "flirty" conversation that quite silenced Mrs. Lisle and the other ladies.

With a heavy heart she prepared for her evening toilette. Her wearisome old husband had fretted and stormed during the whole of their stupid, stately dinner, and solitary in heart and filled with bitter feelings, she sat down in her luxuriant dressing-room, and gave directions for her evening costume. The morning's conversation influenced her orders, and she ejaculated inwardly, "I will be splendid, at least"—then came before her the recollection of her last interview with Clement Rogers, and hot tears would have poured out, and bitter, wailing sobs, but

pride held them back. With looks of more anxiety than usual, she regarded herself in the mirror, after the completion of her toilette, but the rich, velvet robe of garnet hue that hung around her figure in heavy folds, and the flashing diamonds that sparkled in her hair and on her dress failed to satisfy: she hated the reflection the mirror gave her, and murmured, "splendid without, and wretched within," then turned to go to the brilliant ball, where she was to meet with the only one she had ever loved, and whose true heart she had spurned from her.

They met, those parted ones—but with what different feelings! She, with remorse and heart-aching wretchedness—he, happy in the bliss of his young wife's love. He looked at Mrs. Bentley, cold and stately as she seemed, surrounded with magnificence, and felt only a calm indifference: but a rush of blissful emotions passed through his heart as he turned and gazed on the gentle, loving bride, whose soft, Heavenly eyes beamed on him with love and truthfulness.

"Ellen Wilmer was 'right,'" he exclaimed to himself. "I never could have been happy with such a cold, proud creature. How much I must have altered, for I can scarcely believe I was ever so infatuated with her as to leave home and friends because she jilted me."

Ellen swept through the rooms, followed by expressions of admiration; but sick at heart, and taking no interest in the splendor and position in life for which she had bartered her heart's happiness. When she rested her head on her pillow at midnight, her only prayer was for death. But for years did her tiresome existence last; while pride demanded the daily, hourly sacrifice and penance. In youth she had sowed the seed of selfishness, and in her cheerless old age she reaped its bitter harvest.

MRS. MAJOR JONES.

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

"I DECLARE, the effrontery of some people is unbearable," said Mrs. Major Jones, as she fanned herself violently at Saratoga, one day during the height of the season. "Who is this young man that makes himself so conspicuous? Captain Carden he calls himself. The captain of some canal-boat or river sloop, and nothing more, I'll engage."

"Yes, ma'am," said the other old lady whom she addressed, "no doubt you are perfectly correct. He looks vulgar in spite of all his airs."

"I vow," replied Mrs. Major Jones, "Saratoga is becoming entirely too common. In the old times, when you and I were young, Mrs. Brown, and when nobody could come here except they were wealthy, Saratoga was properly select and exclusive; but now it is positively vulgar."

"Ah! dear me," said Mrs. Brown, with a sigh, "I remember when folks came here with their coaches and four, and half a dozen servants. But now-a-days, since rail-roads have come in, butchers and bakers, and all sorts of low folks can get here as well as their betters; and the consequence is that young ladies of birth and breeding often find themselves dancing with tailor's apprentices. The Lord knows what we are coming to!" And Mrs. Brown, in imitation of her grand friend, Mrs. Major Jones, fanned her fat person violently also.

For Mrs. Major Jones was, *par excellence*, the great lady of the house. Her husband held a commission in the army, and had rendered himself conspicuous in the Mexican war, and on the basis of these two things the wife placed her claims of exclusive gentility. She was lean, shrivelled, and ill-dressed, yet nevertheless she set the fashions to a crowd of foolish imitators. She continually talked of the effrontery of the vulgar, yet displayed her own by monopolizing at table the choicest fruits and the dessert. In the public rooms she turned her back on the merchants, tradesmen and mechanics, who, with their families, were visiting at the hotel, declaring that, for her part, she considered that such sorts of people had no business to thrust themselves into the society of the higher classes: yet, in early life Mrs. Major Jones had been a washer-woman, and had been married almost literally from the tub, by her husband, then a private. Uneducated and common place, she was just the person to have her head turned by prosperity, and hence her airs.

But there was another reason for the dislike which Mrs. Major Jones entertained toward Captain Carden. From the very day of his appearance at the Springs he had attracted the notice and almost monopolized the time of the lovely and accomplished Miss Fitzarnold, the heiress of the season. Now Mrs. Major Jones had a gawky, sandy-haired nephew, who, in

virtue of holding a lieutenant's commission, and being entitled to wear a uniform, a right which he exercised on every possible occasion, thought himself possessed of the exclusive claim to Miss Fitzarnold. When we have said that the young man was as ill-bred as his aunt, and scarcely less ignorant, it will be readily understood that with a woman of sense and merit, which the heiress was, he would have had no chance, even if all rivalry had been absent. But both he and his aunt chose to attribute the coldness and ill-concealed contempt, with which Miss Fitzarnold treated him, to the arts of Captain Carden; and Mrs. Major Jones accordingly only waited for her revenge.

An opportunity came sooner than she had expected. While she was conversing with Mrs. Brown, the heiress came in, and sitting down at a centre-table, took up a book and began to read. Miss Fitzarnold was attired in a riding-dress, and was apparently waiting for some one. Jealousy whispered to the aunt that the intended cavalier was Captain Carden, and she determined immediately to fix a barb in the heart of the young girl.

"Ah, good morning, Miss Fitzarnold," she cried, raising her voice. "How d'ye do? I am glad, my dear, to find you so charming. I did not notice you at first, or I would have spoken sooner, but the fact was, my child, that we were just talking of a certain personage, and I was hinting his sad story to my dear friend, Mrs. Brown."

What made Miss Fitzarnold color so guiltily? How did she know to whom the speaker alluded? But, after a moment's embarrassment, she replied to the salutation of Mrs. Major Jones, and, assuming an air of innocence, inquired whom the speaker meant.

"I mean Captain Carden, my dear," replied the old intriguer, fixing her keen grey eyes on the young girl, "of whom nobody knows anything, and about whom everybody is talking. I was just saying," she continued, giving a meaning look at Mrs. Brown, "that there was a Carden, a private in the regiment, when my husband was at Monterey last summer, who would have been shot for cowardice and desertion if Gen. Taylor had not said that the fellow was too worthless to have good lead wasted upon him, and who in consequence was well whipped and then drummed out of camp. Do you know the first name of this young man?"

Her hearer turned red and pale by turns, and this though striving to appear unconcerned. Not unaware of the speaker's habit of abusing everybody, Miss Fitzarnold still felt that there might be truth in this story. Her lover had come to Saratoga entirely unknown to her, and begun an acquaintance, through the facility of introduction common to watering-places. This acquaintance had rapidly ripened into

an intimacy, how rapidly the poor girl now shuddered to reflect! Usually guarded in her relations with the other sex, the heiress, for once, had allowed herself to be remiss. The truth was that the handsome person, fascinating manners, intelligent conversation, and exhaustless fund of anecdote picked up in his voyages over the world, had made an impression as sudden as it was profound on the hitherto untouched heart of the young girl. She had yielded herself to the delicious happiness of this stranger's society, without stopping to think. But now, at these words of Mrs. Major Jones, she awoke from her delusion. What did she know of her lover? Even if the person alluded to by the speaker was not Captain Carden, and of this she felt certain, for surely one seemingly so brave could never have been a coward, still her lover might be an impostor. She had been taught suspicion, as all heiresses are, and she trembled to think what a gulf she was escaping. These reflections passed rapidly through her mind while Mrs. Major Jones continued speaking.

"Perhaps you don't know his first name?" said Mrs. Major Jones, maliciously enjoying the distress of her hearer.

"Oh! yes, ma'am," answered Miss Fitzarnold, rousing herself, "yes, I believe—I think I have heard—in short, ma'am, I remember," she said, assuming all the distance she was capable of, "that it is Henry."

"Henry!" almost shrieked Mrs. Major Jones, lifting up her hands in well affected surprise, "the very name. And now I think of it, the culprit was, according to my husband, a tall and rather good-looking young man, with dark eyes and hair, and had been a barber's apprentice, who had robbed his master's till and then enlisted. I have no doubt it is the very man. To think, my dear Miss Fitzarnold, to think my good Mrs. Brown, what an impostor we have been harboring in our midst! Positively my nephew should horsewhip him out of the town, if the dear lad would not demean himself too much by doing it. But what is the matter, Miss Fitzarnold, are you ill?"

"No, I thank you," replied the heiress, feebly, rising, and trying to smile. "It is only a rush of blood to the head, to which I am subject, and which makes me dizzy for a moment when it comes. I will give up my ride, and go and lie down. By dinner I shall be perfectly well."

The door had scarcely closed on her retreating form, when Captain Carden looked into the room. Not seeing Miss Fitzarnold, he ventured to ask if she had been there, on which Mrs. Major Jones answered that she had, but subsequently had gone to her chamber intending to remain until dinner. "And did she leave no message?" the captain asked. "None," was the reply. The young officer looked momentarily angry, then darted a keen glance at the speaker, and finally turned carelessly from the apartment, and was heard on the piazza humming the popular air of "Old Uncle Ned." Some lovers have a habit of humming comic tunes when they are puzzled or mortified; and Carden was one of these.

"And was this young man really drummed out of camp?" whispered Mrs. Brown, when he had departed.

"There was a Carden, or Marsden, or Arden, or some such name," replied her companion, "and its just as likely to be this fellow as not. I dare say it is. Wasn't Miss Fitzarnold cut? To think of her having had a barber's apprentice for a beau." And the malicious old creature laughed sardonically.

Meantime the victim of this base slander had fled to her room, where, casting herself on her bed, with her riding-habit still on, she burst into a passion of tears. "Oh!" she said, at last, between deep sobs, "that I should have been so foolish. Poverty I should not mind, for I have wealth for both. Nor do I care for what they call high birth, for nobility of mind is the true aristocracy of a republic. But a coward—one who has been whipped! Yet it cannot be. He is all that is pure, and high-souled, there must be some terrible mistake. And yet she was positive. But no, it is not the same person, it cannot, cannot be."

She was not, however, happy in spite of her disbelief; for the question would continually rise to her mind, "*who is he?*" Oh! how bitterly she repented having allowed her feelings to carry away her judgment, how she accused herself for having loved so quickly, and, as she feared, so foolishly. "But I will retrace my steps, I will see him no more," she said, "I will not even send an excuse for not fulfilling my engagement, lest it should lead to a renewal of the acquaintance. He will take offence at my rudeness, and that will end it. And, to make sure, I will keep my room all day."

The lover fully expected a message from Miss Fitzarnold explaining her conduct, and when the morning passed without his receiving any, he became incensed. Accordingly, at dinner, though he took his usual seat next to her chair, he resolved to be cold and reserved. But when the meal passed, and yet she did not make her appearance, he became seriously alarmed. When the dessert was over, and all hope of her coming had vanished, he rose from the table, and, seeking her maid, asked if Miss Fitzarnold was ill. "She was," the servant replied. "Would she be down in the evening?" "No, she was too sick, she might not be down for a week." There was something in the girl's manner that piqued Carden, and he turned away resolved to inquire no more. "It is a woman's whim—a piece of coquetry, perhaps—and yet I began to hope she returned my love—fool that I am," he said, bitterly; and with this exclamation, vowed to think of her no more.

But the next morning, at breakfast, he looked for her as anxiously as ever. She did not make her appearance, however. About noon, half crazed with jealousy, despair and uncertainty, Carden resolved to overlook everything, and make new overtures to her. He accordingly wrote on the back of a card a pressing request to see her, if only for five minutes, unless she was really too ill to sit up, or to leave her room. In a few minutes a reply came that Miss Fitzarnold could not grant the interview, though without a syllable in explanation.

In fact she was persisting heroically in her resolution, though with many a heart-ache and many a tear. If she could have asked her lover frankly to tell his history, she would have done it, but her modesty

shrank from such a proceeding with a man who had not offered himself. She almost wished he would ask for an interview, in hopes he would propose, but when he solicited one, she shrank, with a woman's true instinct, from the crisis. Five minutes after, she repented of her decision; and resolved to go down to dinner, and thus afford a chance to explain.

But, at dinner, Carden sat in a new seat, sullen and reserved, nor did he once look at her. It was so, in the evening also, in the public drawing-room. He never came near her, and allowed his eyes to meet hers but once, and then he bowed distantly and coldly. Mrs. Major Jones saw the mutual conduct of the pair, and congratulated herself that she had separated them forever. In the course of the evening, she heard Captain Carden tell a friend that he was going to leave, the next day; and now she saw, as she thought, the coast clear for her nephew.

The awkward, yet conceited youth was sitting by Miss Fitzarnold, endeavoring to render himself agreeable to her, but only disgusting her, when the celebrated Commodore C—— came walking up the apartment. Mrs. Brown was on a sofa not far from the heiress, and the veteran, wishing to rest awhile, took a seat beside her before he noticed who this neighbor was.

"Ah! commodore, how do you do?" said the gossip. "Have you heard the news? Shocking, is it not? To think that such ruffians should get the *entres* here with people of consideration."

The commodore looked at her for an explanation.

"I see you are astonished to hear me use such strong language," she said. "But you will be more so, when you are informed of all. You see that tall, Bowery-looking sort of a dandy yonder, don't you, leaning against the door, and trying to look like a Corsair?"

"You mean Carden. He *does* look out of humor."

"Oh! you know his name. Well, we've found him out. Who do you think he is?"

"Who?" said the veteran, with his peculiar smile.

Every word of this conversation was audible to Miss Fitzarnold, who sat in torture while it went on, coloring and trembling.

"You may well ask who. Well, he is a barber's runaway apprentice, who was whipped at Monterey for cowardice, and afterward drummed out of camp."

The commodore laughed outright; but, after a moment, said bluntly—

"Somebody has been hoaxing you, I fear, Mrs. Brown."

"No, indeed," she cried, eagerly, interrupting him.

"Are you sure?" he said.

"I have it from Mrs. Major Jones, who ought to know, because her husband saw him whipped; and besides everybody to-day says it is true. Ah! here is Lieutenant Jones," she cried, turning to where he sat at Miss Fitzarnold's side. "He will tell you that this Captain Carden is an impostor, and all about it."

"Ah! yes," drawled the youth, thus addressed, and lifting his eye-glass he stared at Captain Carden. "My aunt knows all about it, he is a runaway barber's boy, and any one can see impostor written legibly in his face."

The commodore rose to his feet at these words. "Young man," he said, sternly, "I should do right to confront you with Captain Carden, and repeat your words; and but for the presence of these ladies I would do it. I know all about Carden. He is the only son of an honored and wealthy Carolina family, a master commandant in the United States Navy, and a captain by courtesy. A braver, nobler, more gentlemanly man does not live. A few years ago he won his present high rank, for it is high for one so young, by capturing a notorious pirate in the West Indies, and that too with the odds in men against him. I can pardon Mrs. Brown for her mistake, but that you, who pretend to be a gentleman, should, without inquiry, slander a fellow officer, is not to be forgiven. Allow me to say, if you go on as you have begun, you will be no honor to the service."

The old veteran spoke indignantly, for he was a plain, blunt man, and thoroughly despised the would be coxcomb he addressed. His hearer, obtuse as he was, shrank before the withering reproof. He stammered, hesitated, looked in every direction except at the commodore, and finally suppressing an oath, rose and hastily left the room.

The heiress rose too. She was impulsive in all noble deeds, and the moment she heard how she had wronged Carden, she forgot everything except that, in justice to him, she ought to apologize for her late rudeness. She accordingly crossed the room rapidly, and laid her hand on Carden's arm. He had not observed her, and started in surprise. She did not give herself time to think, but said hastily—

"I have been unjust to you. I heard reports to your disadvantage, and—and almost," she smiled winningly, "believed them, I fear. You will forgive me, won't you?"

Captain Carden had almost snatched that fair hand to his lips, before all the room, but recollecting himself he contented himself with drawing it within his own and passing out into the piazza. There, after a moment's pause, the pair wandered off in the moonlight.

What passed in the very long walk they took together, never was repeated by either; but, when they returned to the hotel, they were betrothed for life.

Carden, though aware of the reports to his disadvantage, could not learn from his mistress who originated them. He obtained this information, however, from the commodore, and, glad to find that there was a man to father the slanders of Mrs. Major Jones, took the promising nephew by the collar in the presence of the gentlemen, after all the ladies had retired, and ejected him from the hotel.

The lieutenant, fearing a horsewhip if he returned, for Carden had intimated that such a punishment would await him, did not come back; and the next morning decamped entirely from Saratoga. He was followed immediately by his aunt, whose star too had set.

Carden and his lovely bride were married the ensuing winter, and spent the first summer of their wedded life at Saratoga; but that place, we are compelled to record, has never since been honored by the presence of MRS. MAJOR JONES.

MRS. SMITH'S EXCURSION.

BY JOHN SMITH.

"WILL you have a little more sugar, my dear?" said Sarah Jane, seeing that I did not relish my tea.

"A little, if you please," and Mrs. Smith walked round the table, and put some more sugar in, at the same time stooping down and giving me something sweeter—a kiss.

I was sipping my tea, thinking what a fine thing it is to have such a loving, attentive wife, when she said—

"My dear, I should like to go some place to-morrow—will you take me?"

"Certainly, with pleasure, where do you wish to go?" said I, unhesitatingly.

"I knew you would. You are always such a kind, good husband!" and Sarah Jane threw her arms around me, giving me a most affectionate squeeze, while her eyes beamed with delight.

"But where do you wish to go?" again asked I, feeling confident that Sarah Jane would never ask to go to any place where I might not with propriety take her.

"Why Mrs. Brown has been on a fishing-excursion, and said they had so *delightful* a time of it that I said I would go on one. I know *you* are so fond of fishing."

I had promised too much. How could Sarah Jane go fishing? Who would take care of Master John, and the young Sarah Jane, not to say anything of the baby? It was necessary to retrograde, but it had to be done cautiously.

"But Sarah Jane and John, what shall we do with them?" said I, as a commencement.

"Take them along."

"And the baby?"

"Mr. Smith, you would not have me go and leave the baby for a whole day?" and Sarah Jane's eyes looked volumes of reproof at my supposed barbarity.

This was a poser. What could I do? Sarah Jane knew nothing of fishing, but carried away by Mrs. Brown's glowing description of a fishing party, had set her heart on going. On the other hand colds, croups, fever and ague, and the ills that children are heir to, stared me in the face, did we take the dear pledges of our love with us. It was a desperate case. I must try on another tack.

"Well, my dear, where shall we go?" I asked, trying to smile.

"We will get a boat and sail down the river, of course!" she replied, surprised that I should ask where to go.

"But I cannot sail a boat."

"You can't sail a boat! and been fishing so often."

"There was always some one with me who understood it. I never went otherwise."

"Did you never sail a boat to Glos'ter?"

I did once hold the rudder of a boat while a party

of us run down to Glos'ter, and had imprudently boasted of it. That was, however, before wind and tide. I gently hinted this fact to my wife.

"Then let us go down with the wind and tide, as you call it," said she, positively, "I don't see why you can't do so if you want to."

It was no use to explain to Mrs. Smith the fact that the wind and the tide would follow their own course, and not comply with my wishes. She would hear nothing of the kind. As a last effort I said—

"What if the boat upsets? We will all be drowned."

"Drowned! how you talk! Can't you swim?"

My swimming had been confined to the bathing-tub on "Exchange Retreat," anything more I never dared venture; so I replied that *one* could not support *four* in the Delaware.

"Didn't Jerome, the sailor, save the lives of *one hundred* people in the ocean itself?" said Mrs. Smith, thinking that what a common sailor could do I could easily accomplish. "If you do not wish to take me, Mr. Smith, say so, and I can stay at home;" and her eyes filled with tears, and her face betokened such acute disappointment that I could not have refused her had it been my life that was at stake.

"My dear," said I, with an affectionate look, "you know that I want to take you. I will go and engage a boat, and you can invite whom you please."

Fortune favored me, and I soon returned to inform Mrs. Smith that it would be ready as early in the morning as we chose to start, hinting at the same time that we had better be ready at six o'clock, as the tide would be then running down. Mrs. Smith, however, is rather fond of showing off before her neighbors, and could not be persuaded into such an early start. What did she care for the tide? If it wanted to run down why let it run down. What do you mean by low water? If the water would be too low for a boat to sail in, couldn't we get a carriage? It was no use to tell her that, for hadn't she seen large ships sailing up and down the river at all hours of the day. She didn't care a fig what was going down, Charlotte and Charles were going with us, and that was all we need care for.

At first I was rather dissatisfied with this addition to our numbers, but a second thought showed me that it was a decided gain. Charlotte, my wife's sister, could help to take care of the young ones, while Charles, Charlotte's sweetheart would, no doubt, be a valuable assistant to me.

Mrs. Smith could hardly sleep that night for thinking of the anticipated pleasure of the morrow, and she rose at an early hour so as to have ample time to make arrangements. As usual, however, the greater the hurry the less the speed; so it proved with Sarah Jane, for though she hurried and hustled, it was to no

purpose, the fire wouldn't burn, the steaks wouldn't cook, nor the coffee boil. After more than double the usual time spent in its preparation, Mrs. Smith announced that breakfast was ready. But how different from the morning meal Mrs. Smith usually invites me to partake of. The steak was most decidedly rare, the coffee had that light color which lovers of the beverage most dread, though it is a guarantee that it will not affect the nerves, while the butter in the hurry had been set on the stove, and was most certainly more affected by the heat than anything else. Sarah Jane's face was flushed with vexation, while my hopes of pleasure were at the lowest ebb.

I now put on my fishing rig and slipped out to purchase an extra line, and being detained somewhat longer than I anticipated, I found them all ready, including Charlotte and Charles, on my return. Without going in I announced that I was waiting.

Mrs. Smith, all smiles and good-humor, advanced, carrying the youngest, and leading the other two. I was astounded! I could scarcely believe my eyes. There was my wife dressed in her favorite light colored silk frock, her best bonnet and satin shoes, while the children were arrayed as though for a fancy ball. I've said that Mrs. Smith knew nothing of fishing, and this was proof positive. If I was astonished at her appearance, she was no less so at mine.

"Mr. Smith!" cried she, in the most unfeigned surprise.

"Mrs. Smith!" said I, with equal astonishment, "what do you mean?"

"Mean, Mr. Smith, pray what do *you* mean?" her patience, which had been oozing out for some time, being now fairly exhausted, "do you wish to go out with me in that coat? You look like a drayman."

"Do you wish to ruin your clothes? Couldn't you find a better use for that dress than to spoil it, as you certainly will if you wear it to-day?"

Mrs. Smith drew herself up to her fullest height, and, in a tone and manner not to be mistaken, replied, "am I a child, that I cannot decide what is most proper for me to wear? I shall wear what I have on."

To reply would be worse than useless, so I was preparing to start with the best grace I could, when she again asked—

"Are you *really* going to wear that coat?"

"Yes, my dear."

"And those pants?"

"Certainly."

"And that old straw hat, and those big boots, that look like a fireman's?"

"Of course."

"Now, I tell you, Mr. Smith, if you choose to imitate the dress of a house-breaker when you go a-fishing with those rowdy characters you usually go with, I have no objections, it does very well to dress to suit your company; but I wish you to understand that I am not one of them, and when you go with me you shall dress as becomes a gentleman. I will not go unless you do so."

What could I do? Charlotte and Charles were there anxious for the anticipated sport, while Master John was so impatient to operate on the finny tribe that he was making desperate endeavors to catch fish

in the stream that was running from the hydrant. To disappoint them would affront the first two, not to mention the specimen of juvenile music that I might expect from the latter, interspersed with an occasional lecture from my wife. After deliberating for a moment, I came to the conclusion that discretion was the better part of valor, and yielded.

"Well, my dear," said I, breaking the silence that had followed Mrs. Smith's positive declaration, "I believe you are right, and I shall do as you desire," and, suiting the action to the word, I went up stairs and put on the suit she had laid out for me, which was, by-the-bye, the one the tailor had sent home but the week before.

Everything being now amicably arranged, it was not long before we were embarked and sailing down the river with a stiff breeze, though the tide had turned during our long delay, and was running up pretty strongly. Sarah Jane's courage, which, while we were at home, was equal to any emergency, now completely failed her. She was sure we should all go to the bottom. This was not without cause, as, under my unskilful management, we shipped a great deal of water, and were in imminent danger of capsizing every time I put the boat "about," besides being more indebted to the kindness of the pilots of the steamboats that passed us for not being run down, than to my ability to get out of the way. By the time we were opposite Glos'ter my wife could hold out no longer, and said pleadingly—

"Mr. Smith, *do* take off that sail, or we will certainly upset."

As the wind was freshening, I had but little ambition to risk sailing any further, and was quite obliged to Sarah Jane for making a request that saved my own credit. I immediately complied. Now came the tug of war. We were but half the distance I wished to go, and to row the remainder was a considerable task for those more experienced than myself, but as there was no alternative we set to work, Charles taking one oar and I the other. It was hard work. My coat I stowed under the seat in the stern with our basket of provisions, my vest soon followed it, while my shirt collar, which had before stood stiffly up to the danger of my ears, now laid down as though such a thing as starch had never been dreamed of. Master John being unable to dabble his hands in the water, as the boat no longer lay on one side, gave us a specimen of what his lungs were capable of, the young Sarah Jane and the baby going in for a chorus.

Two hours hard rowing brought us to the wished for spot, and we were not long in anchoring, baiting our hooks, and getting them into the water. We seemed about to be rewarded for our labor, for Sarah Jane had scarcely dropped her line into the water ere there was a slight jerking, and then a strong pull. With all the eagerness of an amateur fisherman catching her first fish, she quickly drew it on board, seizing it with her hands to prevent its escape. She dropped it with a cry of pain. She had caught a catfish, and in its efforts to escape its horns had run into her hands, tearing them dreadfully. Her sport for the day was ended. The rest of us were not disposed to give up so easily, so, after binding up her hands, we dropped

in our lines again. Charlotte hooked an eel, and at the same moment I was equally fortunate. But our rejoicing was of short duration. In the effort to secure them both at the same time, they splashed the water over Sarah Jane and Charles, covered Charlotte and myself with their slime, and tangled our lines so completely, that in the attempt to untangle them we were forced to cut them so much as to render them useless.

Being unable to fish any more, we made the discovery that we were very hungry, a fact which in the excitement of the moment we had quite overlooked. Sarah Jane handed us the basket from under her seat.

"What does this mean?" I asked, as water commenced dropping from it. A hasty examination of its contents showed that the dirty water in the bottom of the boat had been washing through it, rendering our dinner decidedly uneatable. A foreboding of evil crossed my mind, and I hastily asked Sarah Jane to hand me my coat.

"Your coat," replied she, "I do not see anything here except this," holding up something that bore a close resemblance to a cloth she uses to wash the floor.

My coat it was, but how unlike the glossy covering I had put on in the morning. Hungry, tired and wet, fishing longer was not to be thought of, so I drew up the anchor and turned homeward. If Mrs. Smith was anxious to attract observation as we started, she was equally anxious to avoid it as we returned. We were a sorry looking party, my face was burned by the sun until it ached; Sarah Jane's nose was as red as though she was a devoted admirer of the brandy bottle; while Charlotte's fair skin was done "brown." Independent of the spoiling of Sarah Jane's dress, my coat, and a doctor's bill for the children in prospective, I stood a very good chance of a curtain lecture from Sarah Jane, so I mentally resolved never to take my wife on a fishing-excursion again.

MRS. WILMINGTON AND AUNT JEMIMA.

BY ELLA RODMAN.

"Come," said Mrs. Marston to Mrs. Bracebridge, who was making her a morning call, "I should like to hear all about the wedding; how was the bride dressed, to begin with?"

"Well, she was dressed very much like other brides—white, brocaded satin, and point lace veil; also looked as brides generally do—interesting."

"I always thought," rejoined Mrs. Marston, with peculiar emphasis, "that she was extremely bold-looking; was she not particularly assured and unblushing in appearance?"

"I did not notice that she was," replied her visitor, "now that I think of it, she *did* blush, and looked extremely modest."

"All put on," said Mrs. Marston, with a contemptuous curl of the lip.

"I do not know," replied Mrs. Bracebridge, "people cannot very easily feign blushing."

"Oh, but she could easily have pinched her cheeks, when you were not looking, to make them red. She is rather pale, and probably an adept in the art; depend upon it, she succeeded in calling up a color behind her veil."

Mrs. Bracebridge was quite at a loss how to reply to this remark, and, therefore, let it pass on.

"Whom did she marry?" pursued Mrs. Marston, after a short pause, "young Milwood, was it not?"

"Yes, but proud as the Milwoods are, I would not care for the name—that is if required to take the inheritance pertaining to it."

Mrs. Marston was *not* in society; Mrs. Bracebridge *was*; and while the former continually indulged herself with the exciting amusement of abusing her dear friend behind her back, she never let an opportunity slip of enjoying her various bits of scandal, and tales of the elite. She lent an attentive ear to this innuendo, and as Mrs. Bracebridge, after the fashion of accomplished story-tellers, seemed disposed to allow a short pause to ensue for the exercise of any laudable curiosity that might be at work in the brain of her auditor, Mrs. Marston, with eyes rather wider open than was absolutely necessary for the purpose of sight, placed herself in a listening attitude, and remained perfectly quiet, as though prepared for some tale exceeding in horror all that she had ever heard before.

"Then you knew nothing of this unfortunate affair?" resumed Mrs. Bracebridge.

"I certainly have heard something," said Mrs. Marston, determined not to show her ignorance of what was going on in the first circles, "I certainly have heard something, but then, false reports, and scandals are becoming so common that we cannot be too careful about lending a willing ear to them."

Mrs. Marston was getting to be remarkably charitable.

"They say," continued Mrs. Bracebridge, lowering her voice almost to a whisper, "that craziness runs in every drop of the Milwood blood. The old lady died in a lunatic asylum; and one sister killed herself—although they pretended that she went off in a fit."

Mrs. Marston drew a very long breath, which she concluded with something that resembled a sigh.

"I am not at all surprised," she rejoined, (although she was very much indeed) "I am not at all surprised, for any one to look at Roland would pronounce him insane. Those projecting eyes always gives a wild, crazy sort of a look to a person's visage, and young Milwood's eyes seem to be fairly starting from his head."

"I thought you must have heard something of it," said Mrs. Bracebridge, "for it is quite the common talk; people would be apt to pity the bride, were it not that they happen to be so well matched. She has a sister whom no one is ever permitted to see, for she never had a particle of sense, and would not, therefore, be calculated to reflect much honor on the family. But now and then she eludes their vigilance, and mortifies them not a little. One day, I think it was Diton who called, and at the door as a matter of course he inquired for Miss Wayland. No sooner were the words uttered than this crazy Jane thrust her head out of an upper window, and screamed out—'yes, I'm at home!' After that it was some time before another escape took place, for I suppose they kept her closer than ever. They say she spends her whole time in stringing glass beads, and manufacturing babies, which she tends with the greatest care."

"Well," said Mrs. Marston, "this *is* the greatest marriage in high life that I have known for some time. I shall tremble when I take up the papers for the future, expecting to read an account of the murder of the young and beautiful Mrs. Roland Milwood by her husband; or else the details of a case of poisoning, in which he is the victim, and she the dark Italian who did the treacherous deed."

It was some comfort at any rate to know that they were all crazy; serve them right for being in the first society!

The subject being dismissed after sundry remarks and observations on crazy people in general, and stylish crazy people in particular, Mrs. Bracebridge introduced another topic.

"Have you heard of the latest performance, the grand *coup d'ail* of our manœuvring friend, Mrs. Wilmington? In my opinion it far surpasses all her other efforts, both for the boldness of the design and artistic finish as to execution."

"Our friend! Speak for yourself, I pray you; she is no friend of mine."

"Well, *my* friend then; because we do exchange

visits, and, therefore, it naturally follows that she must be a friend, though such often turn out our most inveterate enemies. The subject to which I allude is the coming out of Aunt Jemima."

"*Aunt Jemima!* You surely jest—why she must be at least fifty years old!"

"Oh, no; no older than you or I—she is about thirty-five, I should conclude. As Miss Wilmington is not in the habit of accompanying them on their visiting excursions, I was not a little puzzled the other day when their well known vehicle drove up the carriage-path, and two ladies alighted, one of whom I recognized as Mrs. Wilmington; the other, although the face and air seemed perfectly familiar, shone so dimly through an overwhelming cloud of white feathers and blonde lace, that it was sometime before I could trace the features of my old acquaintance. Two cards were delivered, 'Mrs. Wilmington, Miss Jemima Wilmington.' 'Who in the world is Miss Jemima Wilmington?' said Mr. Bracebridge, 'any new relative come to light, of whom Mrs. Wilmington intends to dispose as quickly as possible?' 'Why, do you not remember Aunt Jemima?' I replied. 'Oh, yes!' exclaimed Henry, 'that maiden lady of an uncertain age, who always walked meekly and carefully as though she were afraid of being impolite enough to tread upon the heels of her own shadow.' Henry, you must know, is just from college, and sets up for quite a wit. We all doat upon that boy. But do not for the world repeat this ridiculous speech; a mother's feelings cannot always be restrained, you know, and I thought I would tell *you* this."

"Now that Aunt Jemima is fairly launched," said Mrs. Marston, "of course Mrs. Wilmington's next effort is to procure a 'suitable establishment.' She cannot expect such a settlement as she obtained for Fanny. But what in the name of all that's wonderful can have been her motive for taking this rather curious step? The case of Aunt Jemima seems very much to me like catching up an old kitchen chair that had done duty for several years, and covering it with velvet and embroidery to take its place in the drawing-room just for the sake of oddity. Why there's Mary Maria just about entering the lists, is she not?"

"Mary Maria I consider a hopeless subject on which to exercise one's surmises," returned Mrs. Bracebridge, drily. "About three years ago I called there, and the young lady in question was then a tall, awkward girl, as girls generally are when they first leave off pantalets, and all the etceteras of childhood. There was an old gentleman present from the South or West, or somewhere, whom they called 'Uncle Holmes.' It seems that he had not seen Mary Maria for several years, and while remarking on her unusual growth, asked how old she was. 'Fifteen,' she replied. A few moments after, Mrs. Wilmington entered the room, and said as she directed the old gentleman's attention to her promising daughter, 'is she not a fine, well-grown girl of thirteen, Uncle Holmes?'"

"She is, indeed," he replied, with a smile, "but your estimate of time, Matilda, and that of your daughter must differ a little, for she is fifteen by her

own confession of ten minutes since. She is *too* well grown for thirteen!"

"I should so like to have seen Mrs. Wilmington then!" exclaimed Mrs. Marston, in ecstasy. "What *did* she say?"

"She said very little; what could she say? But she looked vengeance at Mary Maria, and the poor girl has remained stationary at fifteen ever since. Once when I called, Mrs. Wilmington told me that she was sixteen; but that I suspect was a slip of the tongue, for the next time she was fifteen, and so she has remained ever since. According to the common method of computing time, she would now be eighteen years of age; but as Mrs. Wilmington possesses so great a talent for accomplishing wonders, she has probably entered into a compact with the sun and moon to stand still for three years."

"The whole proceeding is so strange," said Mrs. Marston. "No one ever thought anything of Aunt Jemima; I always supposed that she was housekeeper, or something of that sort."

"She was worse—a dependant, poor relation. Far better, and more comfortable for her would the office of housekeeper have been. Her place it was to perform the cast aside work of both mistress and maid; she was alternately the slave of cook, chambermaid, waiter, and every servant from the head down. She was the complete factotum of the children's nurse, and was, as one may say, bound apprentice to the business. I hear though that there is at present a great improvement in Aunt Jemima's prospects in consequence of some unaccountable whim that Mrs. Wilmington has taken into her wise head. But really my call has been prolonged beyond all fashionable duration. I have a visit to pay this friend of yours, my first since the coming out of the new debutante, Robert, drive to Pinewood."

The ostrich feathers in the white hat of Mrs. Bracebridge moved up and down several times in a most dignified manner, very much after the fashion of an old turkey-hen; and away she drove, leaving Mrs. Marston in the midst of a new train of thought. The grand end and aim of that lady's life had been to get into "society." This she had never accomplished in the city, but now that Mr. Marston had purchased the old Branton estate, and figured in considerable style as a country gentleman, she hoped to compass her inclination. To be sure the Arltons, the Collisons, and the Wilmingtons, who made Deerfield their summer residence, and considered themselves the elite of the elite, had not called; but then the Penbrooks, the Starmans, and others who had just as good a right to be *crème de la crème*, had called; and she was now in hopes that through Aunt Jemima she might gain a still wider entree. Society appeared to her in the shape of a large ship about to put off from the shore, with a few fortunate individuals comfortably established upon the deck; others less fortunate, struggling up the sides; and others again, were helplessly floundering about in the water. In a vision which crossed her mind, Mrs. Wilmington seemed perched upon the topmast post of honor—and Jemima not quite so high up, but maintaining a firm grasp of the hand of her august relative—and herself

convulsively clutching the more fortunate spinster as the surest means of ultimately working her way to the top. That was the thing; Aunt Jemima should be the stepping-stone to her ambition.

But it is high time that we turned to the innocent cause of all this plotting and scheming. Jump right into the footman's place pertaining to Mrs. Bracebridge's carriage, and if you can do so without some one's shouting, "cut behind!" and the consequent, and not very agreeable application of the coachman's whip, we will honor that lady with our presence, and wait as she drives slowly and aristocratically on in the direction of Pinewood. At every passing carriage up go the ostrich feathers in a series of graceful bows and entreaties; and then down, down, down, until they again rest upon the India cashmere beneath. Mrs. H——, and Mrs. B——, and Mrs. C——, and Mrs. Everybody seem to be out taking a drive. Mrs. Bracebridge appears to refresh herself with a short nap between every recognition, and leans languidly back in her carriage with a sigh-away, die-away expression, without bestowing one thought on those beautiful woods by which she is passing. Are they not lovely with those tints of red and golden mingled with the last remaining touches of emerald green? And the beautiful sunlight that dawns in between the closely-twined branches, forming a golden net-work on the turf below; while pure and serene in its unclouded loveliness is the rich, deep blue autumn sky. It is the latter part of September, that beautiful month when the wind sways gently to and fro among the branches, singing in a sweet and wailing voice the dirge of dying summer. Gently it passes away like a weary spirit singing to rest, and we cannot tell when it is gone.

They call the autumn mournful—the *sad* season of the year, but spring is far more so. *Then* the sky is cold—chilled with the lingering frosts of winter, and the sun strives in vain to beam warmly and cheerfully on the unawakened earth, while the fair, early blossoms that peep timidly forth, pale and die beneath the blighting breath of the rude, North wind. Spring is like a young heart crushed in its first, warm affections, and the flowers that were springing up within it droop and wither; while autumn, beautiful autumn—it is death; but know you not that it is beautiful to die sometimes in the midst of those we love? Far more preferable than to live! That dying robe is wondrously lovely; see yon crimson-leaved vine that creeps gracefully along the dim, grey stone—is it not most perfect in its coloring? And then the river, that like a silver thread winds calmly on amid those towering hills. It is the beautiful Hudson; and like a crystal speck are its clear waters that ever in the sunlight sparkle and glow with a flashing, radiant beauty.

The carriage has turned in, and like a proud, old English mansion rises the lofty dwelling amid those close, dark trees. The white marble of its stately front contrasts finely with their dark hue—it is from them that the place derives its name. There is a bowling alley on the grounds, but no one ever bowls there, so that it has quite fallen into disuse; but look at that little summer-house, just situated on the brow

of the hill that slopes so prettily to the water's edge. All around it there is a close lattice-work of the pretty cluster-rose, that "last rose of summer," whose pale, delicate looking petals rest in fair contrast upon the rich, green leaves; while here and there like a bright faced visitor peeps forth the sweet-scented honeysuckle. That little bower is a fairy Paradise; but none of the inmates of the stately mansion save *one*, ever come to forget within its bright enclosure the monotonous, unromantic world, and dream away an hour in gazing on the fair, untarnished face of nature.

The carriage drove up the graveled walk, and the visitor soon found herself comfortably seated in the spacious drawing-room. Everything within bore the impress of taste as well as wealth. Nothing more fully displays the parvenue, the plebeian who has suddenly risen to splendor and riches, than the tawdry, ill-purchased decorations of his drawing-room. There may be magnificence, *money* will purchase that; but money cannot buy that pure, discerning taste, that decides at a single glance between *effect* and overloaded decoration. The grand drawing-room at Pinewood was a perfect model of aristocratic elegance. Whatever Mrs. Wilmington's friends might detract from her virtues, they could not deny that she possessed exquisite taste. There were cunning, little Bohemian vases, and cups scattered about in graceful profusion, upon which fell the wandering rays of sunshine until they glowed again in rainbow colors; there were a few superb pieces of statuary that had sprung into being beneath the inspired chisel of Italian genius, and stood there in hallowed beauty like sleeping images of breathing life—while the soft, subdued light that was permitted in the apartment, threw a faint shadow upon the marble features.

Mrs. Bracebridge had been there before, and yet she could not account for the mysterious influence that insensibly stole over her as she passed beneath the draped arches. As she entered the room, a lady came forward to receive her; could that be Aunt Jemima? Her contour was decidedly stylish, and the face, though rather faded in appearance, had certainly been tolerably pretty in youth. Her manners were those of a perfect lady; she acted as though she had always been in the habit of receiving visitors; apologized for the absence of her sister-in-law in consequence of an engagement with a sick child, and received Mrs. Bracebridge's pressing invitation for a social visit with great dignity. That lady departed with a very confused idea of Miss Wilmington's real position in society.

Mrs. Wilmington sat one morning in her luxurious drawing-room, apparently wrapt in deep contemplation. Mary Maria, the only grown-up daughter now on hand, sat nearly opposite, buried in a piece of heterogenous worsted work. This female scion of the house of Wilmington was neither handsome, nor ugly, tall, nor short. She was middling in beauty, middling in height, and middling in intellect. Her mother reasoned thus—"that those who were neither one thing nor the other, were capable of being made anything;" and she determined that Mary Maria should set up for a beauty, and come off with flying colors. She was neither "out" nor in, but something

between the two; if anything was to be gained by "coming out," she was to come; if not she was to slay in.

The cottage known by the name of Woodlands, that could just be distinguished among the trees from their high windows, had been for some time tenantless—the possessor having, years ago, set out upon a travelling tour. Mr. Glentworth had now returned; he had married abroad, but lost his wife within a few years of their union, and now came home a widower of forty, to pass his days on the old family estate. Mrs. Wilmington had heard of his riches, had seen a splendid pair of black horses, accompanied by a very handsome equipage, which was said to contain the wealthy widower, and immediately requested Mr. Wilmington to perform the part of a good neighbor, and invite the stranger to dinner. On the morning in question that lady sat with her eyes fixed upon her daughter, and reasoned thus—"that it would be a very desirable thing for Mary Maria to become Mrs. Gordon Glentworth, (the very name was considerable without all its bright belongings) and that to accomplish this desirable end, she must use every effort. He had been sometime abroad, and was doubtless disgusted with the artifice, and insincerity of the world—he was, therefore, more liable to be attracted by Mary Maria's youth and simplicity."

But then somehow or other (she was sure she could not tell how) it had got about the neighborhood that she was somewhat of a schemer; and, therefore, "should prying people remark upon her paying undue attention to Mr. Glentworth, the neighbors would immediately conclude that some plan was in progress. Even if she succeeded it would be very disagreeable to hear the sneers and remarks of the envious and malicious, but if she failed? She must contrive some way to put observers on the wrong track."

Just as she had come to this conclusion, like a bright idea flashed across her mind the thought of Aunt Jemima. Yes! that would be excellent. What was more natural for people to say than that the widower of forty was making the agreeable to a spinster of thirty-five. Aunt Jemima would do very well to deceive with; for they, foolish things! might be apt to overlook the charms of Mary Maria, and conclude that the maiden sister-in-law was the person for whom she was negotiating.

It would certainly be infinitely more agreeable to have them say that Aunt Jemima was thrown back upon her hands, than to make this same observation respecting Mary Maria. Aunt Jemima, she *meant*, should be "thrown back;" she had not the least idea of her really "going off;" such a thought never entered her head, for she could not dispense with her useful services in the family, and while people thought and spoke only of *her*, she could easily attend to Mary Maria. But in order to pass this deceit it would be necessary to make a very material alteration with respect to Aunt Jemima's dress, treatment, &c. Had Mrs. Wilmington but overheard the remarks of Mesdames Marston and Bracebridge with respect to Aunt Jemima's "coming out," she would have been perfectly delighted. Nothing could be more completely in accordance with her plans.

Full of this grand scheme, she immediately left the room to seek her unconscious relative and commence her operations.

Mr. Wilmington had been the architect of his own fortune, and as his determination to marry was openly expressed, his sister looked forward with no little anxiety to his choice of a partner. He married a pretty, showy girl, with little or no fortune, who was by no means so artless as she tried to appear. Mr. Wilmington sunk into a mere cipher in his own house; and Aunt Jemima insensibly fell into the daily routine of duties that had been marked out for her. She sat at the same table with the rest of the family to be sure, but it was her duty to listen—not to talk. No one had ever said to her, "you shall never say more than yes or no—never hazard an original observation of your own;" but there are various ways of intimating this without the help of words; the averted ear—the superciliously raised eye-brow which seems to say—"what! are *you* talking?"—and a cool, contemptuous indifference. Sometimes indeed the thought would obtrude itself, "what have I to live for?" but it was wiped away with the next polish of her ever active duster upon the French china and silver which belonged to her especial care.

Sometimes she indulged herself with a solitary visit to the little summer-house, when she could not help asking herself if there were not in the world such a thing as had sometimes floated over her mind in the shape of a bright-winged ideal—true, self-sacrificing love. Ah! and if there were, that stray jewel was not for her! She could not bind it on her brow and wear it there; for when these thoughts arose she treated them as idle imaginings, and whispered to herself—"that youth and comeliness had flown, and left her the poor, dependant relation." It was wrong for *her* to indulge such feelings—they were only for those whose fortunes had been cast beneath a more propitious star. She too had heard of the new comer; she had heard that he was liberal and generous—but what had she to do with him?

Mrs. Wilmington found her sister-in-law just where she expected to find her; in the drawing-room pantry, giving an extra polish to the already resplendent silver dinner-service; and being a very plausible woman, she commenced thus:

"You certainly do polish silver beautifully, Jemima; the hump must be astonishingly developed, but still why *do* you do it? No one requested it. What would people think to catch the sister of Ralph Wilmington, Esquire, in this closet, rubbing silver like any old housekeeper?"

Aunt Jemima started at being so unexpectedly addressed, and nearly let fall the massive punch bowl. Now she thought of it, nobody had exactly *told* her to do it, but she saw ~~that~~ it was expected of her, and somehow or other she had gradually fallen into the habit.

To this set speech of her sister-in-law's she answered only with a smile, and Mrs. Wilmington continued—

"I have been thinking, sister, what a ridiculous thing it is of you to settle yourself down so quietly to be an old maid. Thirty-five is not so very superannuated,

and people often marry at fifty. I am determined," said she, with a smile, "to allow this conduct no longer, and the sooner you begin to improve the better. I will not have any old maids about me, so you need not say nay; your features are very good, and I wish to try the effect of dress. So foolish of you to persist in wearing drab colored merinos!"

"I think," replied Miss Wilmington, "that it would be still more foolish of me to affect gay dress at my time of life, Matilda. The name of 'old maid' is no disgrace to one who puts forward no pretensions to anything more; the time is now gone by when such aid as you speak of *might* have become me, and with it all desire for gaiety."

She had not spoken so much at once for at least ten years, and was quite astonished at herself. She was not at all certain that she *had* settled herself down to be an old maid; she had *been* settled, and very much wondered what all this could tend to.

Mrs. Wilmington with playful force took the silver from her hands, locked the closet, and fairly led her up stairs; increasing her surprise on the road by sharply rebuking a careless housemaid for neglecting to arrange Miss Wilmington's bed, and leaving her chamber-door open. "Lanks a massy me!" said the girl, as she bounded into the apartment. "I guess some folks is getting set up. I shouldnt wonder if beggars was to ride!"

Certain important additions were made to Aunt Jemima's wardrobe, and all at once she found herself courted by the whole neighborhood. She could not call to mind any recent and praiseworthy act that had thus raised her in the estimation of others; but even Mrs. Wilmington was surprised by the easy manner in which she bore her new honors.

In the meantime Mr. Glentworth came to dinner—helped Mary Maria to a potato, for which she said, "thank you"—asked her if she was fond of the country, to which she replied, "yes"—inquired if she rode much on horseback, to which she replied, "no"—and then turned for amusement to his opposite neighbor, who proved to be Aunt Jemima. He was so much pleased with this conversation that he took the earliest opportunity of renewing it, and to Mrs. Wilmington's great delight made frequent visits to Pinewood.

Aunt Jemima unconsciously began to acknowledge to herself that Gordon Glentworth approached nearer her ideal of perfection than any one she had ever before seen; but the thought was always followed by a sigh. Mr. Glentworth had been several times seen to enter the gate at Pinewood, and some one had once passed his phanton on the road when it happened to contain himself and Miss Jemima Wilmington; which formed sufficient grounds for the report that his horses were constantly in her service, and that they were engaged. But then the very next day the unmeaning face of Mary Maria looked out of the carriage window, and people were again at a loss. Mrs. Wilmington was in the very best of humors whenever such reports reached her; and as Mr. Glentworth continued to come and behave very well at each visit, she began to think seriously of Mary Maria's wedding clothes. The only difficulty was he had not yet proposed.

One evening, toward dusk, Aunt Jemima sat alone in the drawing-room. Mrs. Wilmington and Mary Maria had taken the carriage to pay a visit some distance off, and were not expected back till late in the evening. She could not tell why, yet she felt remarkably sad, and sat pondering on some points of her sister-in-law's conduct that did not quite please her, nor did she quite understand it. She had not understood it from the beginning; but she had lately noticed that Mrs. Wilmington seemed far from pleased whenever Mr. Glentworth left Mary Maria, and entered into conversation with herself. She had been rather afraid at first that it was that lady's intention to promote a match between the widower and her sister-in-law, and had held rather coldly back in consequence. But this certainly did not look like it, and if anxious to secure him for Mary Maria, why had she dragged her forth from her obscurity to experience new mortifications?

Then she wondered what might be the nature of Mr. Glentworth's sentiments toward her. What if he preferred her to all others? It was hardly—she almost shrieked in surprise and confusion; Mr. Glentworth stood before her! He had inquired at the door for the ladies; and on being told that Miss Wilmington was at home, entered with the privileged freedom of a daily visitor. She was so buried in a reverie that she knew not of his entrance till he stood before her, gaily exclaiming—"a penny for your thoughts!"

At this moment lights were brought, and so deep and visible a blush mounted to her very brow, that Gordon Glentworth, although not by any means a vain man, whispered to himself—"what, if she had been thinking of him?" Miss Wilmington's confusion was extreme; even the very servant seemed to look knowing, and the moment he had left the room Mr. Glentworth poured forth an avowal of his love and hopes. Her only answer was a burst of tears; she had so little expected this; so little thought of her being the object of such noble and generous love that she was quite overcome. But her tears were soon succeeded by smiles, for they were tears of joy.

But after the first few moments, as more common place thoughts suggested themselves, she became quite astonished at her own temerity, and wondered how she had ever dared to think of leaving. Who would keep the best drawing-room in order? Who would get up Mrs. Wilmington's fine laces? Who would in short do all that she had done?

"I am afraid this cannot be," said she, mournfully, "the family will not know how to do without me."

"I was not aware that you had one," observed her lover, with a smile.

This remark opened a new train of ideas. She had *not* one. Had her brother ever treated her as a brother? Had his wife ever treated her as a sister? Had her nephews and nieces ever shown her the respect and affection due to an aunt? Was she not continually sacrificing her inclinations for their sakes, and obtaining nothing in return? Had she not all her life been a drudge and a convenience to thankless relations? Her reason told her that it was so; therefore why should she hate to leave them?

Mr. Glentworth was a very persevering man, and

insisted on keeping his seat close to her, until she had replied as he wished her to. Dreading the sharp eyes of Mrs. Wilmington, should she come in and discover them, she gave the required assent. Poor Aunt Jemima! she had ventured to keep stowed away amid the recesses of her heart one pet prejudice, which she never dared whisper to others—and this was an animosity to *widowers*. But that provoking man! there he kept staying, and staying; pretending to give her advice with respect to her sister-in-law. He told her to be independent, and not at all daunted by any thing Mrs. Wilmington should say. Aunt Jemima, from some remarks of Mr. Glentworth's, and some thoughts very much to the purpose of her own, began to be somewhat enlightened with respect to her sister-in-law's scheme.

Mrs. Wilmington's nerves, the next morning, received a severe shock. In the first place, Aunt Jemima walked calmly into the room, and announced her engagement to Mr. Glentworth. Then with a voice that slightly faltered as it proceeded, she continued—

"During my residence in this house I have been treated neither as a sister, nor an aunt. I do not speak of any particular insult or cruelty, Matilda; I have not been suffered to feel the want of food, neither have I been tasked beyond my strength, but I have been regarded merely as a household machine—and there are some hearts which can bear anything better than an absence of affection. Of the latent plan which I more than suspect you to have entertained, I will not speak except so far as to say that it was unworthy of you as a lady, and still more so as a sister."

During the few moments occupied by these words, Mrs. Wilmington looked very much as though she could have exclaimed—" *Non une parole, et memo il parle bien!*" But she was an extremely polite woman, and possessed great command of her countenance. Her first impulse was to pour forth the volley of her

wrath upon her sister-in-law; but then prudence whispered that this same sister-in-law was no longer a poor dependant, the subject of her whims and caprice—but the chosen mistress of Woodlands, who had suddenly risen to a "position," and would from thence diffuse the radiance of her glory on every member of the family. But no one could have guessed from her face what was passing within. She sat biting the end of a straw, and when Miss Wilmington had concluded, replied in a made-up voice—

"You and I, Jemima, are very differently constituted—I have not a particle of romance in my composition. I cannot understand one half of this speech, and, therefore, am willing to take it all in good part. With respect to a plan, I am entirely ignorant of what you mean; but as Woodlands is so near, I hope you will find it convenient to give us the pleasure of your company frequently. Let this kiss be a token of the sincere pleasure with which I congratulate you. You know I told you that it was of no use to give up and be an old maid—this is the consequence of my advice."

Mrs. Wilmington let the subject drop. Her sister-in-law either could not or would not receive any impression.

The marriage took place soon after; and as the bride was now in the "first society," Mrs. Marston immediately besieged her with calls and invitations. Mrs. Wilmington often remarked, "that she never did make but one match, and that was in the case of poor, dear Jemima, who really had done very well considering." Her auditors reserved their smiles until her departure; and Mrs. Wilmington constantly repeated the tale in happy ignorance of its effect.

In the annals of the Wilmington family, the marriage of Mary Maria is not to be found. It is almost needless to add that at Woodlands Aunt Jemima experienced all that happiness, which for so many years had seemed to her the mere creation of fancy.

MY FIRST LOVE.

BY PAUL CREYTON.

THERE are probably but few men among us (to say nothing of the women!) who have not some pleasing recollections of a school-boy passion. For my part, I frankly confess that I am not of that few. With the memory of the time when I used to study nights that I might devote the day, school hours and all, to innocent amusements, such as playing "fox and geese," and "tick-tack-tow," behind the teacher's back, and sliding down hill, snapping the whip, and playing ball during the intermission—with the memory of that happy time, I say, is associated the reminiscence of a boyish lover. I had my Mary, and I was as devoted to her as ever Byron was to his. I was her companion, her servant, and her poet. We went together to get "ground-nuts," to pick up beech-nuts; and to dig sassafras roots in the woods. I used to go for water when she was thirsty, and to hold her bonnet when she wished to crawl through holes in the fence. I was with her continually, whether it was her pleasure to see-saw, to jump the rope, or to wander across the fields.

During the school hours I was not less attentive to my "Mary." I was thinking of her when I should have been thinking of my lessons, and when I should have been writing "copies," I was sending billets-doux to her across the school-house, or keeping up a tender correspondence with her on slates. Of course, my first attempt at poetry consisted of "Verses to Mary."

The teachers sometimes used to let us go out doors and study during the pleasant weather, either because they believed us when we asserted that we could learn our lessons quicker in the open air, or, what is more probable, because they were anxious to get as many of the noisy ones as possible out of the way. At any rate, they used to permit the girls, two or three in one side of the school-house, and the boys to enjoy the same privilege on the other. It is needless to say that the girls and boys had an unaccountable yearning to disobey the teachers, and get together; and that, on such occasions, I was always to be found on the *wrong side* of the school-house, chatting "pretty sentiments" to my Mary.

That I loved my Mary with all the strength and purity of which the young and untaught heart is capable, it is my sincere belief, and I have not a doubt but that she reciprocated my tenderness. But she was fond of mischief, and delighted to torment me with jealousy. This she was well able to do, for I had a rival who was almost as assiduous in his attentions as myself. Fred B—— was a gay, young spark, and I was horribly jealous of him, the more so, when Mary would sometimes leave my society for his.

One night there was a "spelling school." Mary had promised me that she would be at the school-house early, and of course I went to meet her, and enjoy a short season of tenderness before the evening exercises began. But I was destined to suffer some chagrin. Fred B—— was there before me, and when I arrived I found him and Mary on quite too intimate terms to suit my jealous nature.

The candles were lighted. Mary sat on one of the front seats, with a broad table directly before her, and Fred was at the extremity of the table, by which he was prevented from making any very near approaches to the object of our joint attachment.

While the few scholars who had arrived were enjoying themselves exceedingly before the evening exercises commenced, I sat apart, gloomy and sullen, watching with a jealous, angry eye the movements of my rival. At length, to my infinite relief, Fred ran to join the sports of his fellow pupils, and Mary was left alone. She beckoned to me to come and sit with her, but I meant to make her feel my resentment, and much as I wished to speak to her, I scrupulously turned my eyes to another quarter of the house.

Soon the candles were blown out by some mischievous scholars, and the room was involved in total darkness.

"Now," thought I, forgetting my resentment, "now is the time to make up with Mary."

In a moment I was by her side. The table prevented me from approaching too closely, but I whispered her name, and, reaching over, succeeded in getting hold of her hand. I heard a shuffling—I felt that she was removing my hand from the one I held of hers to the other; and then I felt a gentle squeeze. My heart leaped to my throat with pleasurable emotion. I returned the pressure, and was delighted to feel her fair hand squeeze mine with greater ardor than before. I forgot Fred B—— in a moment.

"Do you love me?" I whispered, passionately.

"Dearly!" was the reply.

"Oh! I am but too happy!" I sighed.

"But you do not love me," I heard, in another whisper.

"You know I do!" I exclaimed, almost speaking aloud—"you know I do!"

The fair hand which held my own squeezed it harder than ever. I returned the pressure more ardently than before. Indeed, I was about pushing the table aside, that I might approach my Mary more nearly and embrace her, when—a candle was lighted!

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed a light, ringing voice directly behind me.

I started in surprise—for that was Mary's voice! I looked for her in the seat she had occupied a moment

before, but she was not there; and the hand I had
been squeezing so ardently—that hand, reader, *was*
the hand of my rival!

Like myself, he had flown to Mary's side the
moment the lights were extinguished; and she had
managed, after placing my hand within that of my
rival, to glide out of her seat unobserved. And thus
she had left us, whispering love to each other, and
squeezing each other's hand across the table!

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MY WIFE'S PARTY.

BY HARRY SUNDERLAND, AUTHOR OF "SAVING AT THE SPIGGOT."

A BETTER woman than Mrs. Sunderland does not exist anywhere, though I do say it myself. I consider her one of the "salt of the earth," and I think I ought to know. Still Mrs. Sunderland has her faults—no, I will not call them by so hard a name—still Mrs. Sunderland has her weaknesses, and one of these is a disposition to think well of everybody. On this head, I believe, no one can accuse me of weakness. I am not aware that, as a general thing, I think any better of people than I ought to think. No—I am not blind to anybody's faults, though I can see and appreciate excellencies as well as any one. But to my story.

After we had risen a little in the world, and could afford not only to live in our own house, but to enjoy our share of the elegancies and luxuries of this life, we found ourselves surrounded by a good many who, before, were not over liberal in their attentions. Mrs. Sunderland believed their friendship sincere; but I reserved to myself the right to doubt the genuineness of some of the professions that were made. I didn't like the "my dear Mrs. Sunderland!" nor the particular solicitude expressed by not a few in anything that concerned my wife's welfare; and when she talked about Mrs. Jones being such a kind, good soul, and Miss Peters being so disinterested in everything, I shrugged my shoulders and reserved the privilege of a doubt in regard to all being gold that glittered.

Not having been raised in fashionable life, we had no taste for display, and, although we had our share of company, whether we cared about it or not, we had never ventured so far to sea as to give a party, although we had accepted several invitations to assemblages of this kind. But some of Mrs. Sunderland's good friends and acquaintances insisted upon it, last winter, that she must give an entertainment, and they used such cogent arguments that she, good soul! was won over. I remained for a long time incorrigible; but, as nothing could put it out of Mrs. Sunderland's head that it was due to her position and relations to give a party, I, with much reluctance, withdrew my opposition, and forthwith the note of preparation was sounded.

"Who shall we invite?" was the first question.

Our circle of acquaintance had considerably increased within two or three years, and when we went over the list it was found to be rather large.

"You will have to cut down considerably," said I.

"To do so without giving offence will be difficult," replied my wife.

"Better cut all off, then," was on my tongue, but I repressed the words, feeling that it would be unkind to throw cold water upon the affair at this stage of its progress.

"You haven't got Fanny and Ellen on your list," I

remarked, after a good number of erasures had been made. They were two of my nieces; good girls, but poor. Both were dress-maker's apprentices. They were learning a trade in order to relieve their father, an industrious, but not very thrifty man, from the burden of their support. I liked them very much for their good sense, agreeable manners, and strong affection for their parents.

"Shall we invite them?" inquired my wife.

"Certainly!" I replied. "Why not?"

"Will they be able to make a good appearance? You know that a number of fashionable people will be here."

"If you doubt it, we will send them each a handsome dress pattern with the invitation."

"Perhaps we had better do so," was Mrs. Sunderland's approving remark, and the thing was done as I had suggested.

The pruning down of the invitation list was no easy matter, and it was not without many fears of giving offence that my wife, at last fixed upon the precise number of persons who were to honor us with their company.

The exact character of the entertainment was next to be considered, and an estimate of cost made. Several ladies, *au fait* in such matters, were consulted; and their opinions compared, digested, and adopted or rejected as they agreed with, or differed from, what we thought right.

"It will cost at least a hundred dollars," said Mrs. Sunderland, after we had come to some understanding as to what we might have. The sum seemed large in her mind.

"If we get off with two hundred we may be thankful," I replied.

"Oh, no. It can't go above a hundred dollars."

"We shall see."

"If I thought it would cost so much, I would——"

"There is no retreat now, Mrs. Sunderland. We have taken the step initiative, and have nothing to do but go through with the matter as best we can. My word for it, we shall not be very eager to give another party."

This threw a damper upon my wife's feelings that I was sorry to perceive, for now that the party must be given, I wanted to see it done in as good a spirit as possible. From that time, therefore, I was careful not to say anything likely to awaken a doubt as to the satisfactory result of the coming entertainment.

The evening came in due time, and we had all things ready. I must own that I felt a little excited, for the giving of a fashionable party was something new in the history of my life, and I did not feel altogether at home in the matter. Unaccustomed to the entertainment of company, especially where

ceremony and the observance of a certain etiquette were involved, I was conscious of an awkward feeling, and would have given double the cost of the party for the privilege of an escape from the trials and mortifications it promised to involve.

In order to give additional beauty and attractiveness to our parlors, we had purchased sundry articles of ornamental furniture, which cost over a hundred dollars, and which were of no manner of use except to look at.

It was so late before the elite of our company began to arrive, that we were in some doubt whether they were going to come at all. But, toward nine o'clock they came along, and by ten we were in the full tide of successful experiment. My nieces, Fanny and Ellen, were among the first to appear, and they looked pretty and interesting.

As soon as the first embarrassment consequent on the appearance of the extra fashionables had worn off, and I felt at home once more in my own house, I began to look around me with an observant eye. About the first thing that attracted my attention was the sober aspect of a certain lady, whose husband, by a few fortunate adventures, had acquired some money, and lifted her into "good society," as it is called. She was talking to another lady, and I saw that their eyes were directed toward my nieces, of whom I felt a little proud; they looked and behaved so well.

"What's all this about?" said I to myself. And I kept my eyes upon the ladies as intently as they did upon Ellen and Fanny. Presently I saw one of them toss her head with an air of dignified contempt, and rising up, make her way across the room to where her husband stood. She spoke to him in evident excitement, and directed his attention to my nieces. The sight of them did not seem to produce any unpleasant effect upon him, for he merely shrugged his shoulders, smiled, and answered in a few words that I could see were indifferent. But his wife was in earnest, and placing her arm within his, drew him away toward the door. He remonstrated, but she was not in a humor to listen to anything, and, with surprise I saw them retire from the parlors. My first impulse was to follow them, but the truth flashing across my mind, I felt indignant at such conduct, and resolved to let them do as they pleased. In a little while, the offended lady, bonneted, cloaked and boated, came sweeping past the parlor doors, with her husband in her train, attracting the attention of a third part of the company. A moment after and she had passed into the street.

"Who is that? What's the matter?" went whispering about the rooms.

"It is Mrs. L——."

"Mrs. L——! Is she sick?"

"Why has she gone?"

But no one seemed at first to know. Soon, however, the lady to whom she had communicated the fact that we had insulted our company by inviting "mantua-maker girls," whispered to another the secret, and away it went buzzing through the rooms, finding its way as well to the ears of Fanny and Ellen as to those of the rest of the company. About one

half of the ladies present did not exactly seem to know whether they ought to follow the example of Mrs. L—— or not; and there was a portentous moment, when almost the waving of a finger would have caused our party to break up in disorder.

The moment my nieces understood the feeling that had prompted the lady to withdraw indignantly, they arose and were retiring from the room, when I intercepted and detained them with as little ceremony as possible. They begged hard to be permitted to retire, but I said no; for my blood was "up," as the saying is.

"Ellen and Fanny are worth as many Mrs. L——'s," said I to myself, "as you can find from here to Jericho."

The disaffected ones noticed, I suppose, my decision in the matter, and thought it prudent not to break with Mr. and Mrs. Sunderland, who could afford to be independent. Money is a great thing! Humph! There was a time in our history—but, no matter. We are people of character and standing now!

We had rather a dull time after the withdrawal of Mrs. L——. For a little while the spirits of the company rallied, under the effects of wine and a good supper, but they soon flagged again, and a sober cast of thought settled upon almost every countenance. My poor wife found it impossible to retain a cheerful exterior; and my nieces looked as if almost any other place in the world would have been a Paradise in comparison.

At least an hour earlier than we had anticipated, our rooms were deserted, and we left alone with our thoughts, which, upon the whole, were not very agreeable. Mrs. Sunderland, the moment the last guest retired, went back into the brilliantly lighted parlors, and setting down upon a sofa, burst into tears. She had promised herself much pleasure, but, alas! how bitterly had she been disappointed! I was excited and indignant enough to say almost anything, and a dozen times, as I paced the rooms backward and forward, did I check myself when about uttering words that would only have made poor Mrs. Sunderland feel ten times worse than she did.

"The next time we give a party——"

"We won't!" said I, taking the words out of my wife's mouth. She was recovering from her state of mortification, and beginning to feel indignant.

"You've said it exactly," responded Mrs. Sunderland. "I call this throwing away a couple of hundred dollars in a very bad cause."

"So it strikes me. When fifty or sixty people eat an elegant supper, and drink costly wine at my expense again, they will behave themselves better than some of our high bred ladies did to-night. As for Mrs. L——, Fanny and Ellen are worth a hundred of her. It's my opinion that if she knew everything she would curtail her dignity a little. If I'm not very much mistaken, her husband will go to the wall before a twelvemonth passes."

On the next day we settled all accounts with confectioner, wine merchant, china dealers and waiters. The bills were over a hundred and fifty dollars, exclusive of a hundred dollars paid, as before intimated, for parlor ornaments to grace the occasion.

"So much paid for worldly wisdom," said I, after

all was over. "I don't think we need to give another party."

Mrs. Sunderland sighed and shook her head. Poor soul! Her kind and generous nature was hurt. She had looked upon a new phase of character, and the discovery had wounded her deeply.

A few months after this unfortunate party, from which so little pleasure and so much pain had sprung, I said to my wife, on coming home one day—

"It's as I expected. Pride must have a fall."

"Why do you say that? What has happened?" inquired Mrs. Sunderland.

"L—— has failed, as I predicted, and his lady wife, who turned up her aristocratic nose at our excellent nieces, is likely to see the day when she will stand far below them in society."

I spoke in an exultant voice. But my wife instantly reproved my levity. She cherished no animosities, and had long since forgiven the offence.

So much for MY WIFE'S PARTY!

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NUTTING IN THE WOODS.

BY CHARLES J. PETERSON.

THE golden days of October are at hand, and the earth has begun already to put on her garniture of glory. The green hill-sides are tinted with brown; the landscape swims in mellow haze at morn and eve; birds are preparing for their winter journey to the tropics; and everything in earth and sky proclaims the coming in of autumn. The grapes hang in purple clusters, and the maize yellows the plain far and near. Orchards glitter with golden fruit; the cider-press gushes all day with its luscious vintage; and urchins as they drive the team a-field sing jocosely to think that the last harvest is gathered in. At night the full moon comes sailing up the sky majestic and serene, flooding wood, and farm, and river with a light almost as bright as day. Welcome, welcome to October!

Come—let us go out into the woods. The sober gum has already changed to crimson, while the gayer maple flaunts in green, yellow and red. All through the forest, you will see the vines that festoon the way, hanging their scarlet drapery across the arcades, or twining around the brown trunks of lifeless trees. Every day brings new changes, for every night has its frost, and the leaves, under the nipping touch, change faster and faster. The hickory, the beech, the oak, all in turn yield to this mighty conqueror. As you walk along accustomed paths, the wind whirls the falling leaves around you, until the forest-road is thickly carpeted with decaying verdure. Only the pine and cedar remain unchanged, and these with funereal gloom lift their plumed heads, and nod with melancholy air over the stricken wood.

Listen to the sound of yonder waterfall rising and falling on the ear, with a cadence now low and sweet, now louder and bolder! Let us follow this brawling brook which ripples along, here flashing out merrily in the sunshine, there half-concealed by the overhanging bank. See the long, withered grass, that leaning down to the water, sways to and fro with the many eddies. How placidly the limpid stream glides over this bit of sandy bottom, and how where rocks obstruct the channel it fairly churns itself into foam. And now we reach the waterfall. Is it not glorious in this autumn sunshine? The unbroken sheet of falling water, just where it glides over the precipice, is like polished steel; below it flashes in minute-drops as if a shower of silver was falling from the sky; and in the abyss at the foot of the cataract you seem to behold a huge gulf of the same metal, only frosted, and endowed with life, for it rises and falls continually. All through the year I love to visit this spot. It is beautiful when the spring flowers come peeping above the bank; it is beautiful when the icicles of winter hang around its bare front; but oh! it is most beautiful of all, now in these golden autumn days, when its

low, sweet voice is in such harmony with the mellowness of the season. I love that sound. From the house it ever seems

"A noise as of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the silent stars, all night,
Singeth its quiet tune."

Now, while the autumn is coming on, and before the forest has been entirely denuded, how exhilarating to go forth, with a merry company, NUTTING IN THE woods! To see the gay squirrel crunching his food on the topmost bough, looking at you saucily the while, for he knows he is out of harm's way; to hear the crow, that you have startled from his perch, cawing high over head; to watch the sunlight streaming down in a golden haze across some opening ahead; to walk down long arcades of natural forest trees that are groined more gloriously than the grandest cathedral; and, all this while, to have dear friends with you, perhaps the dearest of all, and it may be children trooping and laughing before you:—all this gives one an exhilaration of spirit such as the dull dweller in the city cannot comprehend. We seem to go back, at such times, to the joyousness of youth, before care had wrinkled the brow, or sorrow lacerated the heart; and with every breath of the pure, bracing air we inhale a new consciousness of being, and glory in existence.

Shake a branch of that grand old tree before you, and the ripe fruit will come rattling down in showers, perhaps into the apron that your partner holds extended for it, but just as likely on the little, fair head, for hazel nuts are no respecter of persons: Or a club sent whizzing in among the boughs will bring back with it a bushel of fruit, that you can scarcely see, however, for the myriads of leaves that are shorn and shaken to the earth. So you go on until you have enough! And then, sitting upon the earth, or some gnarled root, you unfasten your hamper and pic-nic there under the October sun, in those grand old woods. Never did you enjoy a meal more heartily. The balminess of the air; the gentle, bracing breeze; and the sounds of rustling leaves, falling nuts, and the distant waterfall combine to make you forget earth, and lap the soul into Elysium.

All day the jest and the song pass around, and as evening draws on you return homeward, where, after a glorious supper, you retire to such a sleep as you have not known for years; for rustic joys, and open air exercise, and the sweet beauties of nature, "medicine a man to slumber" more potently than all the drugs of earth. Reader! we have passed such days, we have enjoyed such slumbers, and, at the memory thereof, we are fain to wish ourselves again, as in boyhood, NUTTING IN THE WOODS.

ORIGIN AND DESTINY.

BY KATE SUTHERLAND.

AMONG those who aspired to the hand of Laura Woodville, was a young man named Percival, whose father, a poor, day laborer, had, by self-denial through many years, succeeded in giving him an education beyond what was usually acquired at that time by those in the lower walks of life. When sixteen years of age, an attorney of some eminence, who perceived in the lad more than ordinary ability, took him into his office, and raised him to the profession of law. At the time of which we write, Percival, who was twenty-five years old, had already obtained some reputation at the bar, having conducted, to a successful issue, several very important cases.

Mr. Woodville, to the hand of whose daughter, as has just been said, Percival aspired, was a merchant in rather reduced circumstances; but connected with certain old families more distinguished for aristocratic pride than virtues. This connexion was the more valued in consequence of the loss of wealth through disasters in trade, and the inability to keep up those external appearances which dazzle the multitude and extort a homage that is grateful to weak minds.

Laura, a beautiful and highly accomplished girl, was a favorite in all circles; and there were many among the wealthy and fashionable who, for her personal attractions alone, were ready to approach and offer the homage of a sincere affection. Among these was a young man named Allison, whose family had, in the eyes of Mr. Woodville, everything to render a marriage connexion desirable. But Laura never encouraged his advances in the least; for she felt for him a strong internal repulsion. He was wealthy, accomplished, attractive in person, and connected, both on his father's and mother's side, with some of the oldest, and, so called, "best families" in the state. These, however, were not, in her eyes, attractions sufficiently strong to induce her to overlook qualities of the heart. Already, in her contact with the world, had she been made to feel its hollowness, and its selfish cruelty. For something more than mere fashionable blandishments had her heart began to yearn. She felt that a true and virtuous friend was a treasure beyond all price.

While this state of mind was in progress, Laura met Henry Percival. A mutual regard was soon developed, which increased until it became a deep and sincere affection. In the meantime Allison, confident from his position, became bolder in his advances; and as a preliminary step, gave Mr. Woodville an intimation of his views. The old merchant heard him gladly, and yielded a full consent to the prosecution of his suit. But perceiving what was in the mind of the young man, Laura shrunk from him, and met all his advances with a chilling reserve that was not for an instant to be misunderstood. In the meantime,

Percival daily gained favor in her eyes, and was at length emboldened to declare what was in his heart. With ill-concealed pleasure, Laura, referred the young man to her father. As to the issue of the reference, she had well grounded fears.

The day that followed this declaration, was one of anxious suspense to Laura. She was alone, late in the afternoon, when her father came into the room where she was sitting. She saw instantly what was in his mind. There was a cloud on his face, and she knew that he had repulsed her lover.

"Laura," said he, gravely, as he sat down by her side—"I was exceedingly surprised and pained to-day to receive, from a young, upstart attorney, of whose family no one has ever heard, an offer for your hand, made, as was affirmed, with your consent. Surely this affirmation was not true!"

A deep crimson flushed the face of Laura; her eyes fell to the floor; and she exhibited signs of strong agitation.

"You may not be aware," continued Mr. Woodville, "that Mr. Allison has also been to me with a similar application."

"Mr. Allison!" The eyes of Laura were raised quickly from the floor; and her manner exhibited the repugnance she felt. "I can never look upon Mr. Allison as more than a friend," said she, calmly.

"Laura! Has it indeed come to this?" said Mr. Woodville, really disturbed. "Will you disgrace yourself and family by a union with a vulgar upstart from the lower ranks, when an alliance so distinguished as this one is offered? Who is Percival? Where is he from? What is his origin?"

"I regard rather his destiny than his origin," replied the daughter, "for that concerns me far more nearly than the other. I shall have to tread the way my husband goes; not the way he has come. The past is past. In the future lies my happiness or misery."

"Are you beside yourself?" exclaimed the father, losing his self-command before the rational calmness of his child.

"No, father," replied Laura; "not beside myself. In the principles that govern Mr. Allison, I have no confidence; and it is a man's principles that determine the path he is to tread in life. On the other hand, I have the fullest confidence in those of Mr. Percival, and know where they will lead him. This is a matter in which I cannot look back to see from whence the person has come; everything depends on a knowledge as to where he is going."

"Do you know," said Mr. Woodville, not giving the words of his child the smallest consideration, "that the father of this fellow Percival was a day laborer in one of old Mr. Allison's manufacturing establishments? A mere day laborer?"

"I have heard as much. Was he not an honest and honorable man?"

"Madness, girl!" ejaculated Mr. Woodville, at this question, still further losing his self-control. "Do you think that I am going to see my child, who has the blood of the P—'s, and R—'s, and W—'s in her veins, mingle it with the vile blood of a common laborer? You have been much in error if, for a moment, you have indulged the idle dream. I positively forbid all intercourse with this Percival. Do not disobey me, or the consequences to yourself will be of the saddest kind." *

As her father ceased speaking, Laura arose, weeping, and left the room.

A deep calm succeeded to this sudden storm that had fallen from a summer sky. But it was a calm indicative of a heavier and more devastating storm. Laura communicated to Percival the fact of her painful interview with her father, and at the same time gave him to understand that no change in his views was to be expected; and that to seek to effect a change would only be to place himself in the way of repulse and insult. Both of these the young man had already received.

A few months later, and, fully avowing her purpose, Laura left the house of her parents and became the wife of Percival. A step like this is never taken without suffering. Sometimes it is wisely, but oftener unwisely taken; but never without pain. In this case the pain on both sides was severe. Mr. Woodville loved his daughter tenderly; and she felt for her father a more than common attachment. But he was a proud and selfish man. The marriage of Laura not only disappointed and mortified him, but made him angry beyond all reason and self-control. In the bitterness of his feelings he vowed never to look upon nor forgive her. It was all in vain, therefore, that his daughter sought a reconciliation. She met only a stern repulse.

Years went by, and it remained the same. Many times during that long period did Laura approach her old home; but only to be repulsed. At last, she was startled and afflicted with the sad news of her mother's death. In the sudden anguish of her feelings she hurried to her father's house. As she stood with others who had gathered around, gazing upon the lifeless form of her dead parent, she became aware that the living one had entered the room, and, to all appearance, unconscious of her presence, was standing by her side. A tremor went through her frame. She felt faint and ready to drop to the floor. In this season of deep affliction might he not forgive the past? Hope sprung up within her. In the presence of the dead he could not throw her off. She laid her hand gently on his. He turned. Her tearful eyes were lifted to his face. A moment of thrilling suspense! Pride and anger conquered again. Without a sign of recognition, he turned away and left the chamber of death.

Bracing herself up with an intense struggle, Laura pressed her lips to the cold brow of her mother, and then silently retired.

During the time that intervened from his marriage up to this period, Mr. Percival had been gradually

rising in the confidence, respect and esteem of the community; and was acquiring wealth through means of a large practice at the bar. As a husband he had proved most kind and affectionate. As a man he was the very soul of honor. All who knew him held him in the highest regard.

After the death of his wife, Mr. Woodville fell into a gloomy state of mind. His business, which had been declining for years, was becoming less and less profitable; and, to increase his trouble, he found himself progressing toward embarrassment if not bankruptcy. The man whom of all others he had wished to see the husband of his daughter, married a beautiful heiress, and was living in a style of great elegance. He met the brilliant bride occasionally, and always with an unpleasant feeling. One day, while walking with a gentleman, they passed Allison, when his companion said—

"If that man doesn't break his wife's heart within five years, I shall think she has few of woman's best and holiest feelings."

"Why do you say that?" asked Mr. Woodville, evincing much surprise.

"In the first place," replied the friend, "a man with bad principles is not the one to make a right minded woman happy. And, in the second place, a man who regards neither virtue nor decency in his conduct, is the one to make her life wretched."

"But is Allison such a man?"

"He is, to my certain knowledge. I knew him when a boy. We were schoolmates. He then gave evidence of more than ordinary natural depravity; and from the training he has received, that depravity has been encouraged to grow. Since he became a man I have had many opportunities for observing him closely; and I speak deliberately when I say that I hold him in exceedingly low estimation. I am personally cognizant of acts that stamp him as possessing neither honor nor, as I said before, decency; and a very long time will not, probably, elapse, before he will betray all this to the world. Men like him, indulge in evil passions and selfish designs, until they lose even common prudence."

"You astonish me," said Mr. Woodville. "I cannot credit your words. He belongs to one of our best families."

"So called. But, judged by a true standard, I should say one of our worst families."

"Why do you say that?" asked Mr. Woodville, evincing still more surprise.

"The virtues of an individual," replied the gentleman, "make his standard of worth. The same is true of families. Decayed wood, covered with shining gold, is not so valuable as sound and polished oak. Nor is a family, raised by wealth or any external gilding, into a high social position, if not possessed of virtue, half so worthy of confidence and esteem, as one of less pretension but endowed with honorable principles. The father of Mr. Allison, it is well known, was a gentleman only in a Chesterfieldian sense. A more hollow-hearted man never existed. And the son is like the father; only more depraved."

Mr. Woodville was profoundly astonished. All this he might have known from personal observation, had

not his eyes been so dazzled with the external brilliance of the persons condemned, as to disqualify them for looking deeper, and perceiving the real character of what was beneath the brilliant gilding. He was astonished, though not entirely convinced. It did not seem possible that any one in the elevated position of Mr. Allison could be so base as was affirmed.

A few months later and Mr. Woodville was surprised at the announcement that the wife of Allison had separated herself from him, and returned to her father's house. Various causes were assigned for this act, the most prominent of which was infidelity. Soon after an application for a divorce was laid before the legislature, with such proofs of ill-treatment and shocking depravity of conduct, as procured an instant release from the marriage contract.

By this time the proud, angry father was beginning to see that he had, probably, committed an error. An emotion of thankfulness that his child was not the wife of Allison rose spontaneously in his breast; but he did not permit it to come into his deliberate thoughts, nor take the form of an uttered sentiment. Steadily the change in his outward circumstances progressed. He was growing old, and losing the ability to do business on an equality with the younger and more eager merchants around him, who were gradually drawing off his oldest and best customers. Disappointed, lonely, anxious and depressed in spirits, the conviction that he had committed a great mistake was daily forcing itself more and more upon the mind of Mr. Woodville. When evening came, and he returned to his silent, almost deserted dwelling, his loneliness would deepen into sadness; and then like an unbidden, but not entirely unwelcome guest, the image of Laura would come before his imagination, and her low and tender voice would sound in his ears. But pride and resentment were still in his heart; and after gazing on the pensive, loving face of his child for a time, he would seek to expel the vision. She had degraded herself in marriage. Who or what was her husband? A low, vulgar fellow, raised a little above the common herd? Such and only such did he esteem him; and, whenever he thought of him, his resentment toward Laura came back in full force.

Thus it went on, until twelve years from the time of Laura's marriage had passed away, and in that long period the father had seen her face but once; and then it was in the presence of the dead. Frequently in the first years of that time had she sought a reconciliation; but, repulsed on each occasion, she had ceased to make approaches. As to her husband, so entirely did Mr. Woodville reject him, that he cast out of his mind his very likeness, and, not meeting him, ceased actually to remember his features, so that if he had encountered him in the street he would not have known him. He could, and had said, therefore, when asked about Percival, that he "didn't know him." Of his rising reputation and social standing he knew but little; for his very name being an offence, he rejected it on the first utterance, and pushed aside rather than looked at any information regarding him.

At last the external affairs of Mr. Woodville became

desperate. His business actually died out, so that the expense of conducting it being more than the proceeds, he closed up his mercantile history, and retired on a meagre property, scarcely sufficient to meet his wants. But scarcely had this change taken place when a claim on the only piece of real estate which he held, was made on the allegation of a defective title. On consulting a lawyer he was alarmed to find that the claim had a plausible basis, and that the chances were against him. When the case was brought up Mr. Woodville appeared in court, and with trembling anxiety watched the progress of the trial. The claim was apparently a fair one; and yet not really just. On the side of the prosecution was a subtle, ingenious and eloquent lawyer, in whose hands his own counsel was little more than a child, and he saw with despair that all the chances were against him. The loss of this remnant of property would leave him utterly destitute. After a vigorous argument on the one side, and a feeble rejoinder on the other, the case was about being submitted when a new advocate appeared on the side of the defence. He was unknown to Mr. Woodville. On rising in court there was a profound silence. He began by observing that he had something to say in the case ere it closed, and as he had studied it carefully and weighed with due deliberation all the evidence which had appeared, he was satisfied that he could show cause why the prosecution should not obtain a favorable decision.

In surprise Mr. Woodville bent forward to listen. The lawyer was tall in person; dignified in manner, and spoke with a peculiar musical intonation and eloquent flow of language that marked him as possessing both talents and education of a high order. In a few minutes he was perfectly absorbed in his argument. It was clear and strong in every part; and tore into very tatters the subtle claim of reasoning presented by the opposing counsel. For an hour he occupied the attention of the court. On closing his speech he immediately retired. The decision was in Mr. Woodville's favor.

"Who is that?" he asked, turning to a gentleman who sat beside him, as the strange advocate left the floor.

The man looked at him in surprise.

"Not know him?" said he.

Mr. Woodville shook his head.

"His name is Percival."

Mr. Woodville turned his face partly away to conceal the sudden flush that went over it. After the decision in his favor had been given, and he had returned home, wondering at what had just occurred, he sat musing alone, when there came a light tapping at the door from the hand of a child at his door. Opening it, he found a boy there not over five or six years of age, with golden hair falling over his shoulders, and bright blue eyes raised to his own.

"Grandpa," said the child, looking earnestly into his face.

For a moment the old man stood and trembled. Then stooping down, he took the child in his arms, and hugged him with a sudden emotion to his heart, while the long sealed fountain of his feelings gushed

forth again, and tears came forth from beneath the lids that were tightly shut to repress them.

"Father!" The eyes were quickly unclosed. There was now another present.

"My child!" came trembling from his lips, and Laura flung herself upon his bosom.

How changed to the eyes of Mr. Woodville was all after this. When he met Mr. Percival he was even more surprised than in the court room at his manly dignity of character, his refinement and enlarged intelligence. And when he went abroad and perceived what he had never before allowed himself to see, the

high estimation in which he was held by all in the community, he was still further affected with wonder.

In less than a year after this reconciliation, Mr. Percival was chosen to a high office in the state; and within that time Mr. Allison was detected in a criminal conspiracy to defraud, and left the commonwealth to escape punishment.

So much for origin and destiny. Laura was right; it concerns a maiden far more to know whither her lover is going than whence he came; for she has to journey with him in the former and not the latter way.

KATE DOUGLASS; OR, PHILADELPHIA IN SEVENTEEN SEVENTY-SIX.

BY CHARLES J. PETERSON, AUTHOR OF "THE OATH OF MARION," "AGNES COURTENAY," & C.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28.

CHAP. IV.—TRENTON.

THE night was bleak and threatened storm. The Delaware surged sullenly along, the ice grinding and splitting with the tide; while the giant trees, that overhung its banks, tossed their skeleton arms in the wind, groaning as if in agony. A few stars were occasionally seen on high, but they were visible only for a moment, before driving clouds hid them from sight.

It was the night of the twenty-fourth of December, 1776, a time that will ever be memorable in American annals. Washington, after having been defeated at Long Island, had endeavored subsequently to make a stand in New York, but had been forced to retreat through New Jersey, his army dwindling from twenty thousand to three thousand, while the British general, at the head of nearly thirty thousand troops, thundered in pursuit. Throwing the Delaware between him and the royal army, Washington had gained a breathing spell for his men. But he soon discovered that this inaction would not do: that, if persisted in, the country was lost. The British had already overrun New Jersey, and hundreds of former patriots, believing the cause of freedom shipwrecked, were endeavoring to preserve their lives and property by giving in their adhesion to the royal cause. Every day added to the number of those who thus deserted the popular side. In this emergency, Washington determined on a midnight march to Trenton, hoping to cut off the detachment of royal troops there, and, perhaps, save his countrymen at the brink of ruin.

Seated on a beehive, which had been placed upon the ground for his accommodation, and wrapped in his military cloak, the great hero watched anxiously the progress of the boats, as, struggling amid the drifting ice, they made their slow and toilsome progress from the Pennsylvania to the Jersey side. Hour after hour had passed since he assumed this post, nor had he left it except for a brisk walk along the river bank occasionally, to keep his blood from congealing. Every quarter of an hour or more an officer would approach for orders, or to give intelligence: and the conversation that ensued, was usually in brief words on the part of Washington, showing the pre-occupation of his mind. At last a tall and soldierly figure approached.

"Ah! is that you, Mowbry?" said the hero.

"It is, your excellency," was the reply. "I have been sent by Gen. Knox to inform you that the artillery and caissons are safely landed; and with no further damage than the wetting of a little powder."

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"It is well. I could see that the guns were safe, even by the fitful light of these few stars; but I am glad to be assured there is so little damage done. It is very late, however."

"It is four o'clock, your excellency."

"We must push on without a moment's loss then," replied Washington, rising. He gave an anxious look at the sky, and said—"do you think it will storm?"

The young man made no answer in words; but he took off his cap, which was of fur, and presented the icy particles which had collected there, to his general's touch.

"Good God," said Washington, deeply moved, "is it indeed so? Excuse what may seem an irreverent expression, young man," he added, "but, to-night, my brain is almost wild, and the prospect of being defeated in this enterprise, as this gathering storm forebodes, destroys my equanimity. I have put every thing on the hazard of a die. We must conquer to-night, or lie cold and lifeless by morning. But, I wander—you have seen me unmanned for a moment—forget it. And now to action."

As he spoke he drew his cloak tightly around him, and strode quickly forward in the direction of his horse, which a faithful groom was holding for him near by.

The sight of the general-in-chief in motion convinced all that the moment to set forth had arrived. The troops, who had been landed for some time, and had only waited for the artillery, now gathered into their ranks, and, in silence, the little army began its march.

After proceeding about a mile, Washington divided his army, one portion under Sullivan taking the river road, while the other portion, with himself at its head, pursued the direct way. The wind howled dismally across the landscape; the few stars, heretofore seen, disappeared; and soon mingled rain and hail began to rattle on the soldiers' knapsacks and sting their faces. Yet, bending to the tempest, the men struggled onward. No sound of fife or drum was heard, but in silence the little army pursued its way. No gilded trappings shone out in the ghastly light, but the privates, destitute even of shoes, left their bloody footsteps on the ground. The low rumble of the artillery wagons, the stifled tread of a thousand men, the ringing of the sleet on the moving mass, and the creaking of the forest trees as the storm tossed them about, were the only sounds during that long march of eight miles. Occasionally a man dropped from the ranks completely exhausted, but the rest struggled manfully along. Now and then, as the army passed

some lonely farm-house, the inmate, half rousing from his slumber, fancied he heard strange sounds on the breeze, but reflecting that it could only be the noise of the tempest, he turned and slept again, little thinking that at that very hour, the destiny of America hung trembling in the balance.

It was nearly daybreak when the outposts at Trenton loomed dimly through the uncertain light and fast-falling sleet. The artillery was at the front, and close by it, as was his duty, marched Mowbry. At this instant, Washington rode up, evidently in considerable emotion; and shading his eyes with his hand, peered ahead. Then he turned, and reining in his horse, looked down on the soldiers who crowded around him.

"My brave boys," he said, in a low voice, which trembled with agitation, "the enemy are just ahead; but do not yet see us. All depends on a surprise. Now or never—this is our last chance. Forward."

Tears gushed from every eye at this address: the voice, the manner effected the men even more than the words. The column dashed forward, each man determined to conquer or die. The outposts were driven in, and flying toward the town, carried the alarm with them. But fast as they fled to bear the news of the surprise, still faster pursued the Americans; and the two parties entered the outskirts of Trenton almost at the same moment.

The noise of the firing at the outposts had, however, been heard, and the enemy roused from their beds, or from the tavern, where most of them had spent the night, came rushing into the street, the privates arranging themselves in ranks, and the officers hurrying hither and thither to marshal the men. Col. Rahl, the Hessian commander, threw down the pack of cards with which he had been playing since the preceding evening, sprang to the door and placed himself at the head of his forces.

But now, with the artillery of Knox playing in their front, the Americans came pouring down the street, wild with the enthusiasm the words of their leader had excited. Before that dauntless charge, before those showers of grape-shot, no enemy could have stood. The Hessians broke and fled, and, in a few minutes, the day was won.

Never was a victory more complete. With the exception of a few dragoons who escaped by a back road, the whole force at Trenton was either killed or captured. Among the former was Col. Rahl.

"Ah! Gen. Knox," said Washington, grasping the hand of that officer after the fight was over, "I have to thank you for the execution your artillery did, on this glorious morning. I ought also to thank Captain Mowbry, whom I saw directing the pieces so well: but I do not see him."

"Alas! your excellency, he is wounded, and I fear mortally."

"Where is he?" said Washington, anxiously.

"He has been carried to yonder tavern," said Knox, "where your excellency's surgeon there attends him. Yet life, perhaps, is of so little value to him that he will scarcely thank us for our pains to preserve it: I have noticed that, from the day he joined the army, just before the battle of Long Island,

up to this hour, he has always recklessly exposed himself, as if he sought death."

"Perhaps some disappointment of the heart—poor lad!" sighed the great leader, as he led the way toward the low, wooden tavern, in a room of which Mowbry lay, weltering in blood.

CHAP. V.—THE SICK BED.

THERE is a low, two story house, built of wood, still standing in Philadelphia, in Fifth street, below Market, celebrated as that in which Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. At the period of our story it was occupied as an inn, and, in one of the upper rooms of this building, a few days after the battle, lay our hero. As Washington had retreated from Trenton the same day he made the attack, a conveyance had been provided for Mowbry, and he had been brought to Philadelphia, there to await his recovery.

It was a bright, warm winter morning, and the curtain of the window being withdrawn, the beams of the sun shone merrily into the room. There are few things as cheerful as sunshine, when the earth is covered with snow, and Mowbry feeling the inspiring influence of the day as he beheld the snowy rooftops glittering in the sun, raised himself feebly on his arm and looked around his apartment. During most of his illness he had been either delirious or in a stupor; and this was the first morning on which he may be said to have enjoyed his faculties clearly. An elderly female, a stranger to Mowbry, was sitting near the head of the bed. On seeing the invalid move, she rose and approached him.

"How long have I been here?" said our hero.

"It is now the second day of January, and you were brought here the night after the battle."

"And I was all that time insensible?" he said. "Where is the army? And where am I? This cannot be a military hospital."

The thought of Kate was continually present to his mind, notwithstanding his conviction that she did not love him, and a suspicion—a wild, romantic suspicion—flashed across him that she had heard of his illness and provided secretly for his comfort. Nor did the answer of the nurse, who evaded his most material question, satisfy him that it was not so.

"The army, it is said, has moved again on Trenton, and another battle is daily expected. You are here, in a comfortable inn, with myself to nurse you, and a competent physician, one who says he knew you when you resided in the city."

"Ah! I know him—my uncle's surgeon." And the intelligence confirming his suspicion, he asked again. "But how came I here?"

The nurse hesitated an instant, affecting to be occupied with arranging the clothes: but when Mowbry impatiently repeated the question, she said—

"His excellency, the commander-in-chief, and Gen. Knox both seemed anxious that good care should be taken of you; and as you had no home in Philadelphia they placed you at this inn, and procured me to nurse you."

A deep sigh broke from Mowbry: the little romance he had been framing vanished at these words; he sank back on his pillow, and was silent. Hope, for a moment had given him new life, but now despair seized on his heart; and he scarcely cared to live. He resumed—

"My good woman," he said, "you have been deceived, I fear: you suppose I am able to pay you for your services. But I have not a dollar in the world."

"Never mind that now," replied the nurse. "You are not well enough to talk of such things. His excellency will see me paid, and if he does not, why I shall only have lost a week or two in the service of my country, while many lose their lives."

"But I cannot allow myself to be under such obligations to either his excellency, or to you. I am a beggar, and deserve no better treatment than the poorest private. It is my wish that you see at once to having me removed to the hospital."

The nurse lifted up her hands in deprecation, but was prevented replying by footsteps on the stairs, and after a low knock, the physician entered. He was a man of mild presence, and dressed with great care, his whole appearance indicating alike a kind heart and great deference for the proprieties of life.

"Ah! our patient is better, nurse," he said, smiling at the attendant. Then, approaching the bed, he took Mowbry's wrist to feel the pulse, saying, as he did so—"good morning, captain—glad to see you so well. I knew we should bring you out of it, though it was an ugly fever. But you are worth ten dead men yet. In a fortnight, or three weeks at furthest, we shall have him as well as ever—eh! nurse?"

"Doctor," said Mowbry, "I do not understand all this. Why am I here, instead of in the hospital with other poor fellows? As I can pay neither you nor her, it is my desire that I be put immediately under the care of the army surgeon."

"Tut—tut," said the physician, smiling good humoredly. "Will you turn us off after we have saved your life? If you had been left to the care of a military hospital, such at least as that belonging to Washington's army, you would have been dead and buried before this. No, my dear captain, we have rescued you from the jaws of death, and we intend, as our perquisite, to keep you under our care a little while longer. As for pay, we all get it, in one way or another. I work out of respect to your family—nurse for patriotism—and the landlord because he expects you to be able to foot his bill some day. But you have exhausted yourself with this foolish discussion—lie down, and try to sleep—you may rely that, when you are well, all will be settled to your satisfaction."

Mowbry was fain to take this advice, for his head already reeled; and he was soon asleep. The physician and nurse conversed awhile apart, and then the former took his leave, though not until he had placed a couple of guineas in her hands.

"I do not want him to know that the assistance comes from me," he said, "for he is so proud he would refuse it, and compel us to send him to the hospital to die with the rest. But I have long known his family, and made many a good fee out of them, so that I can afford to lose something now. His

uncle, remember, must know nothing of this, for he has cast the captain off, and I do not care to be known to the old gentleman as helping the disobedient."

When Mowbry woke again, and renewed his questions of the nurse, she was accordingly as close as ever: nor was he able, on that day, or any subsequent one, to learn more than he did in the conversation we have recorded. He soon abandoned the attempt, satisfied that the tale of the nurse and physician was correct, and that Kate, as well as his uncle, had utterly forgotten him. If he had wanted any further evidence of this, it was afforded when he was entirely convalescent, and the nurse was about to leave him. Hitherto he had shrunk from asking directly of Kate, but now he ventured to inquire, though in an assumed and careless tone, if his attendant knew anything of the Stanleys. The nurse, though aware of Mowbry's relation to Mr. Stanley, little suspected the interest her patient felt in the niece, so she replied—

"I have never been in the house, for Mr. Stanley, when ill, is always attended by Miss Douglass, who allows no one else to nurse him. But the whole town is talking of her marriage with Major Despencer."

Mowbry fortunately was sitting, for if standing he would have fallen under the shock of this intelligence. He turned white as ashes.

"They are not married, surely?" he said, with difficulty.

"Oh! no, sir—only going to be. Nothing but the war prevents it, they say. And dear me, how bad Miss Douglass looks since Mr. Despencer joined the army: she has grown as pale almost as a ghost, and nearly as thin too: I suppose she is all the time worrying herself lest the major should get killed."

Mowbry turned his face to the window, away from observation, and hot tears rolled down his cheek. Had he been entirely well, he would not have been thus unmanned, though he would have suffered equally, perhaps. He never felt until now how much of hope had lingered in his bosom. Some chance, he had secretly fancied, would bring Kate and him together before he left the city; for, even as a relative, surely she would feel some interest in him, sick and alone among strangers. From the physician, she must have heard of his presence in the city. Alas! he knew now that he was utterly deserted.

"I think I shall be able to start for the camp to-morrow," he said, at last, raising his head. "I will try at least. Though the enemy have been driven back on New York, there will be hot work in the spring; and I must be at my post." And he sighed profoundly, for, at that moment, he thought how little he should care whether he fell in battle, or survived. "Perhaps if I die in some gallant charge," he reflected, "she will remember me—it may be regret me. Oh! the happy hours we have spent together—and now to be so utterly forgotten."

And was he forgotten? Was the tale of the gossiping old nurse correct? Had Kate, in the eight months that had elapsed since Mowbry was exiled from his uncle's house, changed her feelings so much as to be now about to marry Despencer. Let us follow the old physician to Mr. Stanley's mansion,

on the very day Mowbry departed for the army, and listen to the tete-a-tete conversation between him and Kate.

"Well, my dear Miss Douglass," said he, smiling, "your protegee is off at last; and well quit are we all of him. I have been in fear of detection the whole period. Think what a censorious world would have said, if it had come out that you were nursing a handsome young captain by deputy, and paying all his bills."

Kate blushed deeply, and replied—

"All this you have said a dozen times before. But I could not see him perish, even if he had been only a friend. But now he is gone, the secret is safe; for no one knows it except you, and I can depend on your keeping it. He does not suspect the truth, does he?"

"No, but fancies you have all deserted him."

"Then he has asked after me."

"Not that I ever heard. His silence is my proof that he believes in your neglect."

Kate clasped her hands, and sighed heavily, turning away her eyes to conceal the fast-gathering tears. The old physician soon took his leave, and as he closed the door, he heard a sob. He shook his head, muttering to himself—

"Alas! how that girl loves him, and how he loves her in return. Yet, so long as Mr. Stanley lives, their marriage is impossible; and, therefore, I had better allow them to continue to believe that each is forgotten by the other. They will soon forget, in reality."

He had never been in love himself, else his kind heart would not thus have reasoned. How little the best intentions and the coolest intellect fail to guide strangers to that all-conquering passion, in their actions toward lovers whom they desire sincerely to admire!

CHAP. VI.—VALLEY FORGE.

WE must now carry forward our story an entire year: and what changes a year produces! How many who, a year ago, were in prosperity, are now ruined; how many who were then in health, are now on a sick-bed; how many, then blooming with youth and hope, are now in the silent grave.

It was the last of January, 1778, more than a twelvemonth from the battle of Trenton. The campaign of 1777, after that glorious victory, had been a series of persevering attempts on the part of the British to recover their lost ground and gain possession of Philadelphia, the then capital of the nation. With the opening of spring, Sir William Howe had begun his operations to this end; but, after numerous attempts to dislodge Washington from the Jerseys, in all of which he had been foiled, he was compelled to think of some other route of approaching Philadelphia. Accordingly, toward the close of summer, he suddenly embarked his army at New York, and sailing to the Chesapeake, landed at the head of that bay. The American general, apprized of this movement, hastened by forced marches to throw himself between the British and the capital, and succeeded in bringing Howe to an action at Chad's Ford on the Brandywine. Superior numbers, however, and a higher

state of discipline gave the victory to the royal army; Washington was driven from the field, and the road to Philadelphia being now open, Howe entered that city soon after in triumph.

Anxious, however, to redeem the honor of the American arms, and believing that the absence of a portion of the British troops afforded an opportunity, Washington conceived the idea of surprising the royal army as it lay encamped at Germantown. The attack was made, but, in consequence of a thick fog, failed in the moment of victory. This defeat secured the British in possession of Philadelphia, and the season being now well advanced, the American army retired to their winter-quarters, which they took up at Valley Forge, among the hills of Chester county, about five and twenty miles from Philadelphia. In all the movements of this campaign, Mowbry had participated. Few had done such gallant deeds in arms. Indeed, as the commander-in-chief had said at Trenton, it seemed as if he was entirely reckless of danger. At Brandywine, he had formed one of that corps of artillerymen who, posted in a defile, had checked the victorious career of the enemy and saved the patriot army from entire destruction. He was one also of that mounted band, who, joining Pulaski and the life-guards, made the terrible charge, which cleaving the enemy's ranks like a thunderbolt, and scattering terror and dismay in their track, almost changed the fortunes of the day.

It was toward the close of January, 1778. The day was one of the most tempestuous of the season; the snow already lay more than a foot deep, and was still falling fast; while the icy wind roared wildly over the landscape. The rude huts of the soldiers were half buried in the deep drifts. Few persons were visible in the camp, except the sentries pacing to and fro, or an officer hurrying across the open space to pay a visit. As the morning wore on, faster and still faster descended the snow, until the prospect was fairly obscured by the thick falling flakes: and the scene became dismal and melancholy beyond conception. Not a soul was now seen abroad.

As the hour of dinner arrived, however, four or five persons were observed moving in the direction of head-quarters; for it was the practice of Washington to invite a select number of officers to his table each day; and to share the hospitalities of the commander-in-chief was the errand on which these individuals were now bent. The residence of the general was a small, two-story dwelling, only one degree more commodious than the marquees of his officers. Nor did his table boast of anything but the plainest fare. For this he made an apology on the present occasion.

"You see, gentlemen," he said, glancing at the single round of beef, which constituted the only course for the occasion, "we have no luxuries to boast of; but I hope patriotism, if not hunger will sweeten the dish. Captain Mowbry, I am glad to see you safe home from your forage. It is not my wish to have provisions taken by force of arms, if it can be avoided; but until Congress changes the commissariat department, or we get golden guineas like the royal generals, I fear we shall have to starve,

unless we seize what we require." And, as the great leader pronounced these words, he sighed.

The conversation soon became general, and turned naturally on the deplorable condition of the camp.

"Of the seventeen thousand men, who nominally compose our army," said the surgeon general, who was present, "scarcely five thousand are fit for duty. The fever daily grows worse, in spite of all we can do. Indeed, so long as the men are half starved, and half clothed, all our medicines will prove of no avail." And he too sighed at the melancholy prospect.

"What if the British should come out and attack us?" said Mowbry. "I heard rumors of such an enterprise in my forage, but fortunately our strength is overrated, and I think Howe's caution will scarcely allow him to make the attempt."

"I agree with you," said Washington: "and God knows we have enough to contend against, without having a battle on our hands. My heart bleeds for my poor fellows. I saw one, this morning, standing sentry, who had neither a decent coat nor breeches; some one, however, had lent him an overcoat, but as the wind occasionally blew this aside, I saw the rags in which he shivered; he had no shoes either, and, as he walked his round, blood frequently marked his steps. But I have faith in Heaven, and this supports me."

There was a solemn pause, and then a general officer remarked. "While we suffer thus, the royal troops enjoy every comfort in the city."

"Yes," said Washington, "and the officers indulge in constant festivities. I hear," he added, with as much of a smile as ever lighted his face in that dark period of trouble, "that our gallant foes are quite successful in their onslaughts on female hearts, more in fact than they have always been in more bloody

undertakings. There is a whisper that Miss Shippen and the accomplished Adjutant General, Major Andre, are about to marry; but a more certain report is that Major Despencker was united, last night, to Miss Douglass, a beauty and *bel esprit*, and moreover the heiress of one of the handsomest fortunes in this state."

This intelligence, though less startling to Mowbry than perhaps to our readers, nevertheless called every drop of blood from the cheek of our hero. He saw an impassable gulf now raised between him and her he loved. "It is true then," he said, "she has loved this rival all along: now, at last, I know why she never cared to inquire for me when I lay wounded, and apparently dying a year ago."

Words cannot tell how crushing this blow was to Mowbry. In spite of what the nurse had said, he hoped secretly that Kate was not about to marry Despencker; and as time wore on, and he heard no more of the match, this hope grew almost to a certainty. But now, at one blow, the whole fabric of happiness, he had been building for a year, was thrown down.

Washington's eyes happened to rest on Mowbry at this moment, and noticing the latter's extreme paleness, he suddenly recollected that Mr. Stanley was the uncle of our hero, and as quickly understood all that was passing in Mowbry's heart. The recklessness of the latter in battle was now explained. He felt deeply pained to have been the cause of imparting this pang, and, as he divined that society was the best thing Mowbry wished for at this moment, he rose and broke up the party.

As our hero passed to his marquee, the tempest roared wilder than ever; but the storm without was a calm to that which raged in his soul.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

KATE DOUGLASS;

OR PHILADELPHIA IN SEVENTEEN SEVENTY-SIX.

BY CHARLES J PETERSON; AUTHOR OF "THE OATH OF MARION," "AGNES COURTENAY," &c.

CHAP. I.—THE STANLEY MANSION.

NOT far from Independence Hall, and within sight of that venerable structure, there stood, in 1776, a mansion of considerable pretensions. Its dark stone doorway, its large windows, and the elaborate carving of the hall betokened it the residence of some person of wealth and consideration. It stood a short distance back from the street, and was surrounded by a garden, terminating at its lower extremity in an ancient orchard of apple trees, which, with their low, spreading branches and thick foliage, gave a rural beauty to the house.

It was in the month of June, of the year above mentioned, when a gentleman knocked at the door of this dwelling, and, inquiring for its owner by name, was ushered into the parlor. This apartment was large, and wainscotted to the ceiling. It had two deep windows facing the street, while at the opposite extremity was an elaborately carved mantel-piece, on either side of which a door, resplendent with its polished brass lock, opened into a similar room in the rear. The floor was bare, except in the centre, where a superb Turkey carpet, with a rich border around it like that of a modern fire-rug, was spread. Against the walls stood, at regular distances, tall, sentinel-like chairs of mahogany, with straight backs, but legs curved, and each foot carved to resemble a lion's claw clasping a ball. One or two tables, to match these stiff, yet nevertheless aristocratic chairs, were also placed against the walls. A spinet of mahogany inlaid with some lighter wood, stood on one side of the room; and a sofa, erect and uncomfortable as the chairs, on the other. Before the huge fire-place, which was now of course unused, stood a beautiful Chinese screen, composed of small panels of white marble set in a frame of some dark wood, each panel painted with a different scene in the richest style of the Celestial artists.

The gentleman alluded to, attracted by a picture hung in one of the recesses of the mantel-piece, walked in that direction to examine the painting. It was a portrait of a lady in the bloom of youth, but attired in the costume of the preceding generation. The face was exquisitely fair, a style of loveliness much increased by the powdered hair then in vogue, especially when the dress, as in this case, was black. An air of melancholy hung over the features of the picture, and, as the visitor gazed, his own expression became more sad, when his countenance assumed a striking resemblance to that of the portrait. The same eyes of deep blue; the same noble contour of face; and the same expressive mouth were visible in the gazer and in the face the artist had limned; but the complexion of the one was browned by exposure,

and his hair was of the color of chesnut and not of gold, as was that of the female. As he stood there, attired in the rich fashion of a gentleman of that day, he would have struck any one as a man singularly handsome both in face and figure.

"And so," he said, soliloquizing, "this was my mother, who died in giving me birth. Ah! would that she had lived to guide me with her dear counsels now, when I have no one in the wide world to look to for advice. An orphan since my earliest childhood, for most of my life at school in a foreign land, I never knew what it was to have a home, or any one to love me. And now I am to meet, for the first time, that uncle, her brother, who, because she married for worth and not for fortune, would never see her more. It is strange that he should have allowed her portrait to hang in his parlor, but perhaps it has only been placed here since he relented, and resolved to make her son his heir. I have heard he is singular as well as stern, but though, for my parent's sake, I accept his offered reconciliation, he will find, if he attempts to make me his slave, as I have heard he wished her to be, that the blood of a Mowbry brooks unjust restraint no easier than that of a Stanley. But, pshaw, of what am I thinking? An almost penniless cadet, I am summoned from England and offered one of the richest inheritances in the colonies, and forsooth, before I have been five minutes in my uncle's house, I am speculating about a quarrel."

He smiled as he spoke, and was about to walk to a seat in another part of the room, when suddenly he heard the door in the opposite recess open, followed by the rustling of a female dress, while immediately the form of a tall and singularly graceful girl crossed the parlor with a light footstep, and began to arrange some flowers in a vase that stood on a table between the front windows. The back of this lovely creature was toward him, but, as she executed her pretty task, her face was turned occasionally half around, and Mowbry thought he had never seen anything so charming. It was not that the features were so regularly beautiful, for perhaps the forehead was too broad for a classic model, and the nose was slightly turned up, but then the mouth was unrivaled, the complexion bewitching, and the eyes sparkling with mingled mischief and sentiment. As she arranged the flowers, she hummed a sportive air, pausing now and then to admire the effects she produced. It was evident she was unaware of the presence of a spectator. So light was her every movement, and so sprightly her whole air, that Mowbry knew not whether to think he saw some fairy sprite or a being of real flesh and blood.

"Heigho!" she said, at last, when her task was finished, "what dull mornings these are. So much

politics that one never sees a beau. I am dying of ennui for want of a flirtation. Not a new book worth reading either since Goldsmith's last poem. Now if I only had some one to talk to, I might manage to get along."

Though Mowbry had never seen this fair creature before, he somehow felt immediately at home, and he answered almost unconsciously in the same spirit with which she spoke.

"And why will not I do?" he said, advancing a step, with a smile and one of the profound bows of that courtly age.

At the unexpected sound of a voice, and that voice belonging to a stranger, the young female started, and looked around. Her color was heightened, and her eyes flashed proudly, while she measured Mowbry for a moment with a scornful look. It seemed to him, indeed, as if her very form expanded. Standing with her foot thrown back, and her bosom swelling indignantly, she looked, as he often afterward told her, every inch of a queen.

But Mowbry, instead of flinching before the angry beauty, only smiled the more, and seemed, in fact, rather to enjoy the scene. When, however, he noticed the color deepening on her cheek, and her lip compressing as if at an insult, he said—

"I believe I must introduce myself. Mr. Mowbry, a nephew of Mr. Stanley, and, I believe, for some time an expected guest. I have lingered in New York longer than was allowable, perhaps, but had I heard that some unknown deity presided, as I find, in my uncle's house I should have come by express."

The brow of the beauty cleared off at his name, but her lip curled at the concluding words.

"Spare your compliments, Mr. Mowbry," she said, "for like the bills of Congress, they do not pass freely here." Then changing her whole manner, as she saw him color at her rebuke, she advanced, and tendering him frankly her hand, added, "but I must introduce myself. I am called Catharine Douglass, by my god-mothers, but Kate by a wicked world, and am a humble niece of your good uncle's. I live here, as you will hereafter; and so destiny has intended us, I suppose, for friends: on which supposition I give you my hand."

"A niece of Mr. Stanley! Then you must be cousin to me," answered Mowbry, rather eagerly.

"Not so fast," cried the sprightly girl, withdrawing her hand quickly, "for I am a niece of his deceased wife, and so no connexion whatever of yours; for which I devoutly thank the stars, if you give such cousinly shakes as that. Why my poor fingers are dislocated, I verily believe." And she pressed them between those of her other hand, and made a pretty grimace as if in pain.

"What a wild, yet fascinating creature she is, and what a treasure to find her here," said Mowbry to himself; then he added aloud, "pray forgive me, but I was so glad to count cousin with somebody, that I scarcely was aware what I did. I have never known a relative of any kind since I was a child."

"You have not?" she said, catching something of the sadness with which he had made his concluding remark: and lifting her eyes in sympathy to his face.

"No. I lost my mother at my birth, and my father five years after. My nearest connexion in England, where I was when he died, did not wish to be troubled with me, but sent me at once to a school, from which, in due time, I passed to the University. Since then I have served in a diplomatic station abroad, and have been little in England; but, had I lived there, I think I should scarcely have sought those who neglected me when a child. I often wished I had a sister."

"Did you? Then let me be one," said Kate, artlessly, again proffering her hand; for her sensitive soul was deeply affected by the heart-felt emotion in which his simple narrative had been told.

Mowbry pressed the tiny fingers then again offered to him, but did not speak; his eyes, however, looked the thanks he could not express. The seriousness might soon have become embarrassing, but Kate, in a moment, smiling up at Mowbry, said—

"This is better than having a cousin, is it not? For my part I think it delightful that you are to be my brother—you are quite presentable, I declare, only rather a giant." Then as her eye caught sight of their figures reflected in an opposite mirror, she suddenly ranged herself by his side, and continued, "why you are a perfect Hercules compared with such a poor little child as myself."

Mowbry thought her anything but a child in mind or person, but did not venture to tell her so, after the rebuff his first compliment had received. Though slighter and shorter than himself, she was tall for her sex, reaching above his shoulder, which few women did. They were standing thus, side by side, laughing and talking as if they had known each other a year when Mr. Stanley entered the room.

"Stole a march on me, I declare, Kate," he said. "Here I find you and Mowbry making love before I can even hobble down stairs to meet him. Oh, ho, you cunning puss, you need not blush. Glad to see you, Mr. Mowbry—look very much like my poor sister—pray take a seat—there, I declare, that saucy minx has run away and left me to get acquainted with you as I can. But I hope we are friends already."

CHAP. II.—A PARTY IN '76.

WEEKS passed. Mowbry had become settled in his new abode, and was publicly acknowledged as his uncle's heir. A round of entertainments, given partly to him, and partly to some strangers of distinction, made the aristocratic circles of Philadelphia particularly lively that summer, and as Philadelphia was then considered the capital of the country, and regarded as the wealthiest American city, these circles were of course unusually brilliant.

His acquaintance with Kate progressed with great rapidity. Indeed nothing like reserve had been known between them since their first interview. Under the name of a brother Mowbry had advanced at once to intimacy: he read with Kate, walked with her, rode with her, and generally was her cavalier on all occasions. Such companionship between two young persons of opposite sexes is always dangerous to the peace of one or both, especially when the lady is

beautiful and fascinating like our heroine. Kate was a girl whose conversation, if she had been absolutely plain in face, would have made a listener forget it; what then was the influence she exercised when to talent was added loveliness! A delightful frankness, a sprightliness that rarely flagged, and a wide observation of life and manners for one so young, rendered her a companion peculiarly dangerous to Mowbry. Long before he knew it, he was irrevocably in love, but so familiar was their intercourse, that he did not discover the state of his heart until a trifling incident awoke his jealousy.

An evening party in 1776 was a very different affair from what it is now. The guests assembled at an early hour, invariably in pairs, and it was considered a breach of etiquette for a gentleman to pay much attention except to his partner. Conversation was the staple amusement of the evening. On some occasions there was a dance, more frequently music, but often neither.

One morning Kate looked up from her sewing, and said to Mowbry, who was loitering at the window—

"Are you going to Mrs. P——'s to-night?"

"Of course. Are you not?"

"Yes, I have accepted an invitation from Mr. Despencer, to accompany him."

Mowbry had been carelessly tapping the pane, but at these words he suddenly faced Kate, and with an air of pique and anger, said—

"I thought you went with me—you always do—it is a standing engagement."

His tone aroused the high spirit of Kate, and she answered, with a heightened color.

"Indeed, sir, I knew no such thing. Not at liberty to go with whom I like——"

"I did not mean to say that exactly," replied Mowbry, haughtily. "But I thought—I believe——"

Kate's little fingers were plying the needle twice as briskly as before, but this was the only sign of agitation on her part, and she answered peremptorily.

"But we know no buts, sir. What did you mean to say, if not that? Why should I not go with Mr. Despencer?"

"I do not like him. He is a conceited puppy of an Englishman, who, because his uncle is an earl, fancies he is better than anybody in the colonies. Yet who were his ancestors? A century ago they may have blacked boots for the Mowbrys or Douglasses, for all I know—they rose from nothing, and have not had the earldom a single generation yet."

"I thought you despised birth," answered Kate, with a smile. The taunt was the more provoking, because, not an hour before, Mowbry had been expatiating on the superiority of merit over rank.

"And so I do," answered he, though stammeringly and embarrassed. "So I do. But this fellow is such a popinjay."

"Why his manners are considered a model," retorted Kate.

"He is forever quoting French, which I know you do not understand, how can you bear that?" said he, with a sneer.

"I answer him in Latin, of which he is as ignorant. We colonial ladies, I am aware, know little of French

literature, but, like Lady Jane Grey, we understand the dead languages better than you gentlemen."

Mowbry bit his lip, and looked out of the window in silence: at last he said somewhat sullenly—

"Then you mean to go with this Parisian fop?"

"Certainly."

"False and heartless——"

What more his passion would have hurried him into saying, we do not know, for, at these words, Kate rose to her feet and faced the speaker, her eyes flashing with indignation and contempt.

"What do you mean, sir, by addressing me thus? Who gave you the right to control me? Oh! if I was a man," she added, "you would not dare to insult me with your tyrannical whims: I would teach you, sir, that the blood of a Douglass lives still in their descendant, though one of the humblest."

Mowbry actually retreated from the indignant beauty. Before he could recover from the surprise of the address, Kate, with a scornful curl of the lip, turned away, picked up her work-basket, and without even a curtsy, left the apartment. If he had thought of an apology, he was too proud to follow her with it after this contemptuous treatment; so he took his hat and sauntered out. Before he returned he had made an engagement with one of the belles of the city, to escort her to the assembly that evening.

Mowbry, when he saw Kate enter with her partner, had to confess, in spite of his anger with her, that she never had looked lovelier. The altercation of the morning had called a brighter color than usual to her cheeks, and from some cause or another she was in the highest spirits. She conversed animatedly with her handsome attendant, who appeared perfectly devoted to her. During the course of the evening, she and Mowbry, with their respective partners, were thrown together in one corner of the parlor.

"I understand," said Mr. Despencer, with a shrug of contempt, "that the Congress passed a Declaration of Independence to-day, and that they have ordered it to be proclaimed to-morrow, from the State House. What do you think of it, Mr. Mowbry?"

At this period the aristocratic circle of Philadelphia was decidedly opposed to severing the connexion between the colonies and the mother country. Even those persons whose sympathies had been heretofore American, regarded the act as premature, hence the speaker expected a prompt assent to his implied censure. But Mowbry, though educated abroad, leaned to the popular side, and the events of the day having soured his temper, he answered with uncommon bitterness—

"I think the sooner the colonies accept it, sir, and drive every foreigner out of the country, the better. I am an American, and not fond of seeing the heel of a tyrant on the necks of my fellow citizens."

His hearer's face flushed with momentary anger, but he was too brave a man to seek a personal insult in the words of Mowbry, so he contented himself by answering with cutting irony.

"Methinks so fiery a knight as you seem to be, Mr. Mowbry, would prefer fighting with Mr. Washington to playing the carpet-knight here. They say your great militia captain wants men of mettle amazingly."

Kate saw that the conversation was likely to become angrier, and thought it time to interfere. Had she been on her old terms with Mowbry, she would have taken his part, for her woman's heart was with her suffering country, and that in spite of the half-tory atmosphere with which she was surrounded; but offended at Mowbry's caprice, and piqued that he had not made an apology before this, she said, laying her hand on Mr. Despencer's arm, and rising—

"Come, I see Mrs. Morris beckoning to me, and you must escort me across the room. Her husband can tell us, I suppose, all about this Declaration of Independence, for he is a member of the Congress; and I confess I am dying to hear more about it. We will leave you here," she continued, turning archly to Mr. Mowbry's partner, "to convert my fiery cousin, or, if that fails, to enlist with him. If Venus cannot soothe Mars, Minerva can accompany him to the field: and you, my dear Miss, can play either goddess at will."

Perhaps Kate could have said nothing more cutting to Mowbry. Aware, at last, that he was in love, her indifference maddened him: yet he had the good sense to see that he had already rendered himself conspicuous, and pride forced him, for the rest of the evening, to act more guardedly.

CHAP. III.—THE FIRST FOURTH.

THE next day there was to be a breakfast party at Mr. Stanley's; and, after the meal was over, the guests assembled in the great parlor. This was the apartment which we described, in the first chapter of our narrative; and, from its windows, a view was commanded, across some open lots, of the State House.

This venerable structure, at that time, presented a widely different appearance from what it does now. The grounds in its rear were not laid out in gravel walks and grass plats, as at present, but were wild and rude, with only here and there a tree sprinkled about. Neither of the buildings now erected at the corners of Fifth and Sixth streets, were standing, nor were the long rows of offices between them and the State House. The old pile itself, however, presented much the same appearance as now, except that the steeple then had no spire, but consisted simply of a square wooden tower, rising one story above the roof, and surmounted by two octagonal belfries, with dome-like tops.

Crowds had been collecting, for some time, in both the front and rear of the building, and exactly as the hour of noon struck, the great bell of the State House began to toll. After it had rung for some time, the rushing of the spectators in the direction of the door facing the South, announced that the chief point of curiosity was there. The guests, grouped at the windows of Mr. Stanley's mansion, now beheld a man elevated above the crowd on some temporary platform, and holding in his hands a sheet, from which he proceeded to read. It was impossible to hear at the distance, but several of the gentlemen took their hats and joined the crowd, among them Mr. Despencer, Mowbry and others. They thus

heard that immortal document read for the first time, to a public assembly—that declaration of man's inalienable rights, which since has shaken the thrones of half a world. When it was over, and the crowd dispersed, the party returned to the house, all more or less thoughtful.

Mr. Despencer had, by this time, forgotten his altercation with Mowbry the evening before. Though prejudiced in favor of his own country, he was any thing but the coxcomb a jealous rival represented him; and indeed he was now filled with serious misgivings as to the result of the struggle between America and England. Hitherto, though blood had been shed on both sides, there had been hopes of an accommodation, but the Declaration of Independence had now forever set a seal of separation between the mother country and the colonies.

"I must confess that this has been an imposing ceremony, even to one accustomed to the pomp of courts," remarked Despencer, when the party was re-assembled, breaking a silence of some continuance. "Is it true, too, as I hear, that the bell which tolled to announce this separation of America from England, has the remarkable motto, which your John Adams claims to be prophetic of this event?"

"It has," answered Kate, to whom Despencer appealed by a look. "I remember it well, for I have often read it on the bell. 'Proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison-doors to them that are bound.' It is a text from Isaiah."

"It will proclaim the death-warrants rather of the demagogues who have brought things to this pass," said Mr. Stanley, whose prejudices were all on the side of royalty. "And yet there are some men who have signed that instrument, whom I should be sorry to see executed for traitors, as I fear they will be. My friend Morris, for instance, and one or two men of birth and breeding besides."

"I confess," said Mowbry, "I do not see how any American can hesitate to favor this declaration. For my part I am for Independence, heart and soul."

Kate's eyes met his, for a moment, with a flash which puzzled him; it might mean admiration or anger. But Mr. Stanley rose from his chair, every feature of his face working with passion, and advanced directly toward his nephew, while a profound silence fell on the guests, as if all instinctively foresaw the explosion which was coming.

"What do I hear?" exclaimed Mr. Stanley, almost breathless with rage, addressing Mowbry: "Repeat those words again!" And he struck his cane, which his gout compelled him always to carry, fiercely on the floor.

Mowbry had made up his mind for this avowal, the night before; and he felt a secret exultation that it would be publicly witnessed by Kate and his dreaded rival. "She may not love him," he said to himself, "but she shall see that I can sacrifice everything for principle: will her English lover do as much?"

Thus feeling, he returned his uncle's angry look, and mildly but firmly answered—

"I am for the Independence of my country; and feel it my duty, in this crisis, to assume arms in her behalf."

If a thunderbolt had fallen on the assembly it could not have produced a more startling effect than these words; for the stern and unforgiving character of Mr. Stanley was as well known as his loyalty. A gasp for breath passed through the room, and then all was, for a moment, still. Kate had risen instinctively, and grasped Despencer's arm, where she stood, pale as death, and with her lips parted in terror. Mowbry noted this well, but he attributed her agitation only to natural womanly concern; while her seeking refuge and support from Despencer, in the moment of alarm, he regarded as more unequivocal. "She loves him," he thought; and, with this bitter reflection, he could have looked death in the face without flinching.

But what a contrast to his high, calm air was the excited manner of Mr. Stanley. His face red with passion, his whole frame trembling as if in an ague fit, the uncle tottered up to his nephew, shaking his cane in Mowbry's face.

"Out of my house this instant," he cried. "I disinherit you from this hour. Do you dare to talk treason here, you young villain? Oh! you may well retreat," he continued, as Mowbry stepped back to avoid being struck. "If I was younger I would call you out: as it is I have a great mind to lay my cane across you."

The nephew mastered his passion, and said, with strange coolness—

"Do not strike me, Mr. Stanley, for you are an old man, and I cannot strike back. You would be sorry for it some day."

One of the gentlemen simultaneously laid his hand soothingly on the arm of the excited uncle, who, controlled by the act, turned and nodded obedience. Bringing his cane down to the floor violently, however, he continued—

"I will not demean myself to strike you, sir; and I beg pardon of these ladies for my passion. But," he added, elevating his still fine form proudly, "the Stanleys, father and son, have been true to their king since they crossed the channel in the train of the conqueror; and so, too, I have heard the Mowbrys have ever been also. To see one of their descendants now deserting his royal master, and leaguings with a parcel of traitors, puts me beside myself. He is the last of

either line, too," said the old man, sadly, "but God wills it so, I suppose."

The tone in which these words were spoken thrilled every heart in the room, and almost made the tears spring to Mowbry's eyes. He knew that his uncle loved him, and felt how bitter his present conduct must be to the old man: he, therefore, after a pause, said respectfully—

"Mr. Stanley, my opinions are conscientious ones, as are yours—and each of us must act as we think to be right. God above will judge our hearts. I feel that, hereafter, in this world I must be a stranger to all in this company," and he glanced at Kate, but her eyes were on the floor—she was weeping, though he knew it not—so, choking down a last pang, he said, "but, in Heaven, perhaps, we may meet again. I go forth a homeless, nameless man, an outcast from my family; but I shall be all the fitter, perhaps, to die for freedom."

He felt that he would show weakness if he remained, so, taking a last glance around the room, and seeing that Kate still averted her head, he rushed from the apartment. In the hall he flung a gathering tear from his eye, grasped his hat, and left the house never to return to it.

His uncle had stood speechless with amazement during Mowbry's last address; but when the hall door had clanged to after the exile, the old man gave a vacant look around, uttered a groan, and fell to the floor in a fit of apoplexy.

The free use of the lancet, however, restored him to consciousness; but it was long before he left his bed. Kate watched by him like a daughter, and often in tears, for which, as the sufferer noticed them, he blessed her.

"I am glad you did not love that wicked boy, my dear girl," he said. "It was the dream of my age to see you and he united before I died; but it is fortunate I said nothing of it: I would now sooner behold you in your coffin."

Kate shuddered, and her tears fell faster. She felt that the old man, as well as the exile was deceived, and that she must bear her sorrow in silence and alone.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PRETTY LOUISE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

BY E. A. ATLEE, M. D.

ABOUT a hundred years ago there stood in the street St. Honori, in Paris, a house, since then dilapidated and altogether destroyed, dedicated "to the great St. Martin." In this house lived an honest draper, Peter Gervais, a man who had scraped together considerable property. He was a native of Franche Comte, had served his apprenticeship in Strasburg, and—though in Paris, good luck had, so to speak, grown over his head—still he himself had no confidence at all in Parisians. He did not trust them a farthing; much less would he give his only daughter in marriage to any of the coxcombs or loungers of Paris.

Her name was Louise, and she was eighteen years old: and counted eighty thousand livres as a marriage portion, at that day, a pretty fortune. With one beckon of her beautiful finger she could lay a hundred suitors at her feet. But she was a pious maiden, and the will of her father was her will. Herr Gervais had already given her hand in prospect, at Strasburg, to the son of his former master, the young merchant Reiffenstahl.

Though Reiffenstahl was full of joy, Louise on the contrary was full of sorrow; but she said nothing about it, either in the presence of her mother, a good-natured, corpulent woman; or before the aunt, a meagre, dried up personage; or even before the uncle, who was fat in body, but lean in understanding; still there was a good soul in an honest skin. Louise had no acquaintance with her bridegroom, and was somewhat fearful on that account. Reiffenstahl had the advantage, for he had been presented with a portrait of the bride.

Just for the purpose of quieting Louisa's anxious mind, the young Reiffenstahl resolved to slip away from his business for a month, take leave of his friends, and travel to the metropolis. His bride would then see him and become acquainted with him, before she pronounced at the altar the irrevocable vows.

The good Johann Daniel received his parents' blessing, and escorted by his friends, mounted the post-wagon, which at that time made its passage in about twelve or fourteen days to Paris. A large trunk well stuffed with clothes and presents of all kinds, was Reiffenstahl's companion. But the white pigeon which he had sent before, to announce his coming, had a letter, that the post-rider forwarded "speedily, most speedily," and which also reached Paris quite a week sooner, than the gay candidate for marriage himself.

The father Gervais, on this, had put his store in order with greatest elegance. The shop-boys had to take a bath, and put on clean linen, and stick flowers in their button holes. Mother Gervais turned the other rooms in the house topsy turvy. The aunt put

the kitchen folks on the rack. The good old stupid uncle watched from one quarter of an hour to another, the weather-glass on the window frame. The bride herself dressed and decorated her person more and more daily, but she also arranged the chamber of her coming visitor, with all carefulness, till it looked as trim as a jeweler's case. "God grant," whispered she to herself, "that no four-cornered brewer's form, may profane this dressing chamber! Does he smoke? This were death to me. Indeed the clerk says all the Germans smoke tobacco, and daily eat great quantities of sourkraut. But I won't believe it!" And then with a roguish laugh she added, "many a bear has been tamed!"

The house was now set to rights, the uncle was clearly convinced that for five days the weather had been favorable. The post-wagon might soon arrive, indeed might already have come. Gervais undertook a short journey to the stage-office. But there they knew nothing of the wagon. The clerk supposed, that either snow had fallen on the way, or finally the post-wagon itself. "It would be no wonder," said he with displeasure to a friend that stood by, "if the post-wagon should break to pieces! At this day people are so infatuated with frenzy, rush on so blindly into the world, and think it not enough to lay by on the road even ten hours in a day. What's all this to come to?" But while the clerk was speaking in this manner, came the post-wagon moderately and in good condition, altogether like an orderly man. It had only delayed half a day longer than usual in Chalons, as an officer of that place wished to take passage with him.

That he might not disturb the quiet of Gervais and his family, Reiffenstahl took quarters for the first night at a tavern next to the Barrier. His fellow travellers left him, but it was immaterial to him; for he had time to think of his bride, and of the wonders of Paris! The prodigious trunk, with the address of Gervais' house, was immediately taken to the stage office, and sent next morning by the commissioner of the post-office to Gervais.

The joy in the house was unbounded. The women flew out of bed, and hurried to their toilettes. Casimer, the shop-boy, was ordered to the street as a post sent before, to take up the first stranger under thirty years who should be on the road. The father strutted in a splendid gray coat with steel buttons. The uncle's barometer pointed to continued good weather.

Casimer had brought in three individuals, but they proved themselves free from suspicion. Meanwhile, as soon as the third had departed, the right man marched into the store.

"Here, Gervais, Peter Gervais!" he said.

"At your service, to command," replied the merchant.

Already the paternal heart fluttered under his ruffled shirt bosom: and the visitor continued. "My name is Reiffenstahl. Permit me to hand you my father's letter, my trunk is already in your house, if I mistake not."

The young man would have added something more, but Gervais, embracing him, arrested the last word. Peeping from behind the glass door of the cash-room was the mother; and looking over her shoulder was the aunt; and on tiptoe behind both, was the pretty Louise.

Here for once blind destiny had taken a lucky hold. Reiffenstahl was a comely, tall, slender man, his hair carefully dressed, well versed in question and answer, and compliments; his feet faultless, hands well formed, the expression of his face highly prepossessing. His smile bespoke good humored cheerfulness, his eyes true manliness, and moreover there lay therein so much feeling and tenderness, that Louise could not withhold her approbation from the coming union. Besides, he spoke an eloquent, pure, even delightful French, that echoed favorably in Louise's ear, and was a good offset to the provincial German, with which the father-in-law and son-in-law amused themselves, as soon as they become somewhat warmed and confiding.

How the lovers had an interview does not become our narrative. The readers of this true story, have either already experienced this, and so are somewhat acquainted with it; or they are yet to experience it, and then we would not wish to diminish their happiness; or they *don't intend* to experience, and in such case would feel no interest in it. The only remarkable circumstance in the case was, that in the degree in which Louise was more inspired with confidence, Reiffenstahl was more embarrassed. Louise's glances were still brightening, and Reiffenstahl's were more serious and even melancholy. Louise prattled, by the bewitched bridegroom, finally as sweetly, and in as unconstrained a manner as a resigned and innocent child; Reiffenstahl spake in monosyllables, and a sadness at times expressed itself in his deportment.

"You are somewhat wearied by the long journey?" asked Louise, with sympathy.

"Weary, very weary," replied Reiffenstahl.

"If you wish to retire to rest," observed the sorrowful mother—

"Your chamber is prepared," added Louise, in a friendly way.

"Sleep, while I stay with you?" asked Reiffenstahl with deep tenderness, "Do you envy me this short life by your side? Let us at present forget that sleep, that long sleep."

"Something ails the young gentleman, and in truth, not a little," whispered the aunt to the uncle. The fat uncle thought the same: "He is become at once like an automaton," said he, "you should give him something to eat."

"Truly," said Gervais, "sit down with us to breakfast, my dear son-in-law. You look ill."

"As you desire," answered Reiffenstahl.

Louise enthroned herself proudly at the side of her

beloved. She was happy; Reiffenstahl, after the wine had circulated, gave no little sign of a peculiar tender regard for the bride, and the uncle said, "he was just in want of something to eat."

But the aunt shook her head.

The cooks had done their duty. Flesh and fish and pastry, sent forth delightful odors. The noble Bordeaux, the friend of man, warmed the heart well. Peter Gervais overflowed with mirth and contentedness; his wife smiled more and more pleasantly. Reiffenstahl was lost in the contemplation of his bride, and could hardly keep his eyes off Louise, and the maiden was well satisfied. What Reiffenstahl enjoyed of his meal and wine, was very little, and the feeling of the bride was similar. "He don't smoke, he don't drink heartily, he don't fill his stomach, either with sourkraut or any thing else! Ah, I shall be happy!" So laughed she secretly under her bodice.

Country people at that time sat longer at table than those at the present day. Peter Gervais rose from the table about two or three o'clock, and said to his son-in-law, "permit me, for a little time, to look to my affairs?"

"Understand," replied Reiffenstahl, with some degree of self-conquest, "I also have some important business to do."

"How, will you leave us so soon?" asked Louise, inquiringly.

"I must, I must; it is my lot," said Reiffenstahl, and was meantime as pale as a linen rag.

"Are you unwell?" cried the aunt.

"Hasn't eaten enough," regretted the uncle.

"What should ail me more?" asked Reiffenstahl, bitterly, and seized his hat. Bowing to Louise, he continued—"the earth has granted me one happiness more: I was permitted to see *you*, and now, with sufferings lightened, I go home."

"My God, what a speech!" sighed Louise, restlessly turning. Peter Gervais blustered on the other hand good humoredly.

"Bah, bah; German susceptibility! You weep when you ought to dance. Well, so be it: if you have business, go in God's name, but come back soon again, and your suffering will be at an end. At five we dine; don't forget the hour."

"Alas, I must forget *you*," more earnestly spoke the bridegroom. All were struck mute. The merchant himself was a moment silent in surprise. "Hey, hey, whither do you bend your way now?" said he, with faltering voice.

"To the 'Black Head' tavern at the Barrier."

"To your night quarters? Casimer can go for you."

"Impossible."

"Must you then in your own person—?"

"Understand, dear father. A business that cannot be put off. *For yesterday, at a quarter before midnight, I died, and must needs be met there in my own person, as I am to be buried at four o'clock.*"

The women shrieked aloud: The uncle slipped from his chair. The merchant, Peter Gervais, felt dizzy. Meantime the ghost of the unhappy Reiffenstahl vanished. The servants who were called in from all parts, had not met with it either on the stairs or on the floor. But in the house all hands had enough

to do. The three women lay in a swoon, the uncle combated with visions of ghosts, and with indigestion.

"The man became mad on the road!" cried Gervais: "I'll walk to the royal procurator. All the commissaries, all the beaules shall go in pursuit of this unfortunate youth. Meanwhile, dear brother, take care of the women; and you, Casimer, go as fast as you can to the 'Black Head,' and see if the fool is out there. But hurry now! it is a murderous distance; but you have long legs, and a six livres dollar shall be worth going for if you bestir yourself."

Casimer walked away like a race horse. The uncle plied his women with smelling bottle and camomile tea—and the shadows increased, and night set in. Peter Gervais returned late. "Casimer not yet come back?" demanded he, hopelessly, and sighing and crying were all his answer.

Then the knocker at the door sounded. "The ghost!" cried they all, and shuddered. Then came a man's heavy steps. "The ghost!" screamed the women again, and would have fled if their legs had not been refractory. And into the door marched, in truth something not unlike a shadow, his head thrust out, but paler than the whitest marble appeared his face. It was Casimer, and with a cracked voice he said—"all right, dead and mouse-dead. I am come just from the burying; saw the corpse dressed brave and fine; saw it put into the earth; read upon the cross '*Johnn Daniel Reiffenstahl, aged four and twenty years, born in Strasburg, R. I. P.*' Yesterday, at three-quarters before eleven o'clock, he was carried off by a sudden rupture of a blood-vessel."

When the doctor entered the house he found a total overthrow of the inhabitants. The ghost story flew over all the houses, and was known throughout Paris before the police-officers had taken the notice of the funeral to the protocol. But all gave the report of the ghost in agreement with that of the shop-boy. Johnn Daniel Reiffenstahl was duly dead, and remained so, and no alteration could be made of it to eternity.

Several years afterward, in the golden saloon of the royal palace of Versailles, His Majesty Louis XV. sat at the gaming-table. The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle had been ratified, and the first intelligence of this wished for event, a young, but high commissioned officer, had just laid at the feet of the king. The monarch, well disposed and highly pleased, said to the fortunate messenger—"very well, Monsieur Brigadier, your fast riding shall not be forgotten. My treasurer will not do less for you than for other couriers who have entered our residence with agreeable news. Of myself you have another favor to expect. Remember that."

The Mareschal de Camp, the Marquis of Origny, now entered. The courtiers thronged around him and wished him joy. Notwithstanding his neglected toilette and dusty boots, he was the lion of the evening. The brigadier found many acquaintances in the wide circle, and renewed many a friendship that had long lain dormant, for the marquis had been five years abroad with the army.

"Visit me to-morrow at my house in Paris," spoke a fair-visaged count, "you will be astonished; an entire new building where there once was a cave."

"Where, my friend?"

"In street St. Honore—formerly—but you remember yet—the house, 'to the great Saint Martin'—disfigured the place."

"So, then it is no longer standing?"

"Bah, swallowed up in dust and nothing—swept away and exterminated. Where once the shopmen measured their ells, opens now the door of my house."

Somewhat hastily the marquis asked, "what is become of Gervais?"

"The miser took the money that he scraped up to Passy or to Chaillot. I don't know rightly. There he rests on his laurels with his family. The ghost story in the year forty-nine made the worthy family almost crazy. The daughter went in mourning from that house, has not yet laid it off, and consequently has never married—shed her blossoms, as the saying is, from horror."

The brigadier wrinkled his brow, and repressed a sigh.

"In Chaillot? say you not in Chaillot?" asked he, distractedly. A courtier affirmed it, seeing the count hesitated between Passy and Chaillot. "People then have retired like hermits," added he.

"I must visit them," answered the marquis.

"Thou? what hast thou to do with that shopkeeper?"

"A commission, a weighty one. Did'st know Captain St. Remy?"

"Yes, truly. He was killed, as the Gazette mentioned, in the battle of Oudenard."

"Right, and in the hour of death—his bloody head lay on my knees till he expired—he told me of an inconsiderate trick, by which he ruined the peace of the Gervais family; and bade me by all possible means to make amends, by clearing up the cruellest mystification that had ever been perpetrated."

With intense interest the hearers drew near the brigadier. The king was all attention. "What is going on there?" asked he, of the grandmaster of his huntsmen, who was planted behind his chair. The dignitary went to the group to hear the marquis's story.

The narrator continued: "St. Remy related that he had been in the post-wagon with a Strasburger, who, on his arrival in Paris, complained of a severe oppressive pain in his breast, and, therefore, tarried at the 'Black Head,' where he had pitans made for him, and soon on account of a cold that he had caught he took to his bed, which he thought would aid the effect of his pitans. St. Remy went on in the post-wagon, but noticed on the way that his letter-case stuffed well with hair-curls and ribbons, and the like, were missing. Convinced that they must have been packed by mistake among the night baggage of the Strasburger, St. Remy immediately got out, and went back to the 'Black Head.' How was he astonished to find his fellow traveller weltering in blood, and almost dead. The unfortunate man had ruptured a blood-vessel, and no physician could be found. But there was no way to help him. A veil over a sorrowful night! The dying man bade our St. Remy mention as gently as possible to the bride and her family the sad occurrence, and to hand the letter of his father to the cloth merchant as a voucher. But

now Satan had his sport, and in the wantonness of youth the captain undertook to play the part of the Strasburger for an hour or two. As he lay in garrison at Strasburg for a long time—I became acquainted with him there; and we mangled the Strasburg language on a wager—the Elsaser had the German Patois sufficiently fluent to take a Parisian in at night, and the saucy fellow was but too fond of such sport. But then he was sorry for his evil pranks next morning, and would take measures to make amends. However, we had orders to depart with the regiment, and the alarm of war soon made him forget the past. Nevertheless in the hour of death the thorn pricked the conscience of St. Remy, and I must in his name seek forgiveness of the injured family."

The tone of the court of Louis XV. was very loose and frivolous. Therefore, the whole circle laughed in approbation of the roguish trick that St. Remy had played upon the plebeian. Some said—"would we ever have placed confidence again in St. Remy, who behaved before the world like a simple seminarist!" "What a pity," thought others, "that this pretty ghost story should be cleared up in a natural way to the country people!"

The fair count waited next day in vain for his friend. The marquis went off to perform his commission in Chaillot. About mid-day he entered the country-seat where Gervais resided. An aged maid servant was cleaning the latch of the tressel-gate of the garden. "Is Herr Gervais at home?" asked the cavalier, who was in full uniform. The servant made a deep courtesy, and pointed to the back part of the garden. And when she fully opened her eyes to wander over the showy uniform, she opened her mouth also, cried "murder!" and ran off.

The marquis followed on, the old uncle stepped from the side path armed with a shovel, but on taking a good look at the stranger, he threw down the tool, ran as fast as he could, and cried loudly, "the ghost! the ghost! come again already!" All this was done in a moment.

The marquis entered the house. The screaming maid servant barricaded herself in the kitchen; the meagre aunt sank in a swoon on the stair; Herr Peter Gervais, whom the alarm of his brother's wild flight had brought out of the chamber, at the address of the marquis became like a statue. And in the sitting-room groaned the mother; "oh, see, oh, see, Louise, there it is again! To take us away the ghost is come again."

Louise still paler than common, dressed in mourning, sprang from her chair and called, "oh, let him take me with him to the narrow grave! Gladly would I follow him."

But at her feet sank full of life, full of warmth, with amorous looks, and tears of repentance in his eyes, the handsome man to whom Louise was bound beyond the grave, and with sweet voice exclaimed—"will you forgive me, angelic maiden? During five years in the bloody turmoil of war, constantly and supremely my only thought, can you be reconciled?"

That we may not be too oppressive to the susceptible reader, by presenting her with pictures too exciting; we leave it to herself to conjecture how matters

progressed in Gervais' country residence. We will go twenty-four hours ahead, and it gives us pleasure to inform her that we find ourselves again in the royal palace. This time the king is not playing cards, but is holding audience, and near him is the train of the Marquis of Origny.

"You are coming, I'm certain, to tell me of St. Remy's acts?" said the king, smiling, who had slept well, breakfasted well, was in the best, most wonderfully good humor. "The grandmaster of the huntsmen has already told me. You come too late."

"Not too late, sire; for I can impart to your majesty what the duke does not know. Not St. Remy, whom I met in the street, as he carelessly came from the funeral of the Strasburger, and did not trust himself to fulfil the commission to Gervais—not St. Remy has acted the ghost; I performed the part myself. In relieving a friend of his burden I abused his confidence. But the penalty came at once over my heart and head. I instantly loved like a madman the maiden whom I deceived; and I know not what might have been done if a soldier's duty had not called me to the frontiers."

"Ah, ha, amiable, good-for-nothing!" joked the king; "such tricks! You may thank God that Fleury, the strict cardinal, is not alive. I must have sent you to the Bastille. But what do you desire of me to-day?"

"Your majesty gave me liberty to ask one favor?"

"Aha, you are in a hurry, it seems. What is your petition?"

"A letter of nobility for the shop-keeper, Peter Gervais, and his heirs."

"Bah! what a condescension? How can we grant such a favor?"

"A distinguished trader has great influence and merit in his father land."

"How! I have more than fifty thousand such, Gervais, in my kingdom," replied the monarch, "If I were to reward them all with armorial bearings."

"Gervais is an enthusiastic adherent of your majesty!"

"Might I not say the same of all my Frenchmen?" again proudly asked the king, but with a smile.

"Now then, sire, Gervais has a wonderfully pretty daughter—a perfect image of the graces. Sire! all the attractions of the Cyprian Goddess are united in her."

The king now laughed heartily, and said—"truly if the man has an attractive daughter, your wish, dear marquis, shall be graciously fulfilled—one condition only; bring the maiden to me. I wish to see this wonder of a beauty."

With a roguish expression, aware of the king's artifice, the brigadier rejoined: "I thank my lord and master most humbly for the promised favor. You shall, sire, have a sight of the pretty Louise as soon as your royal hand shall sign my marriage-contract, as soon as I shall be permitted to present to your majesty the Marchioness of Origny."

That the king was endowed this day with more than his usual goodness, to his honor we may not conceal. He gave the cunning marquis his hand to kiss, and thoughtfully repeated, "sign, present, marry. All as you say, marquis! I remain ever your affectionate king."

SHOWING THE WHITE FEATHER.

BY HARRY SUNDERLAND.

THERE was a young officer in the army of General Taylor during the recent campaign in Mexico, whom we will call Gregory. He was at the battle of Resaca de la Palma, and with the troops when they entered Monterey. As he did not belong to the class of heroes who are fond of trumpeting their own fame, one or two of his fellow officers, who, from some cause or other, did not like him particularly, got up a report that he had shown the white feather on a certain occasion during the storming of the last named place. When this was told to Lieut. Gregory, he simply replied, that no truly brave officer would ever charge him with cowardice; and, for the good or bad opinion of others, he cared nothing. The person to whom this remark was made, pleased with the manliness of the reply, repeated it to a fellow officer, and from him it found its way, somewhat exaggerated, to the ears of a young Hotspur named Lieut. Green, who, considering himself referred to, felt bound to make it the plea for a quarrel.

Accordingly, on the first suitable occasion, he offered Lieut. Gregory what he intended for an insult. But somewhat to his disappointment and chagrin, the officer took no notice of the act.

"Why, Gregory!" said a friend, when they were alone, soon after. "I hoped to see you throw your tumbler in that fellow's face?"

"Which would only have been to degrade myself to his level," was coolly replied; "or to make him of more consequence than he really is. Oh, no! The best way to treat such persons, is not to see their ungentlemanly acts."

"But it is due to your character as an officer to notice personal insults."

"How do you make that out?"

"The honor of the service requires that every officer shall preserve the reputation of a gentleman."

"Is the officer who wantonly insults another officer a gentleman; while does the one insulted lose his title to that distinction unless he shoot his man, or get shot himself? But I must own to understanding my relation to the service in a very different manner. When I entered the army, it was with the purpose of serving my country, not quarrelling with officers. So long as I do my duty, I honor the service."

"All that may be true enough in the abstract. But some regard has to be paid to public opinion, which requires an insult to be properly noticed. And particularly in your case should this be done, as insinuations touching your bravery have already been made, and your failing to resent so plain and public an insult, will tend to strengthen the unjust report."

"You believe it to be unjust?"

"I know it!" was the warm response.

"So do I."

"But so does not every one; and you ought to be exceedingly careful not to let this slander gain a wide circulation."

"Must I disgrace myself in the effort to protect my honor?"

"No. Does a man disgrace himself by whipping a cur who barks at him?"

"He would evince a far higher self-respect if he passed on without noticing the ill-natured beast. The fact is, captain, there are too many in the service who disgrace their epaulets by conduct that would exclude them from good society as civilians. Because a young man dresses himself in a military coat and swings a scabbard by his side, it is no reason why he should become as quarrelsome as a barn-yard fowl, nor as ready to strike his spurs at every thing that comes along. This eagerness 'to flesh the maiden sword,' in the blood of fellow officers, on slight provocations, is in very bad taste, to say the least of it. And I, for one, am not going to be any example to its encouragement. Suppose, now, I were to send you to Green with a demand for an apology. Would he give it?"

"No; I presume not."

"Very well. What would be my next step?"

"You would have to challenge him."

"According to the rules of honor?"

"Yes."

"That is, because an upstart fellow, who had as little good sense as good manners, chooses to violate the courtesy of a gentleman in his intercourse with me, I must call him out and shoot him, or be shot myself! I value my own life too much, captain, to throw it away in such a cause; and Heaven knows, I am too free from the spirit of revenge to seek his life for all the wrong I have suffered at his hands."

"I can appreciate all that, Lieut. Gregory. Put those who do not know you so well, will attribute your forbearance to a different motive. Every officer who witnessed the conduct of Green, expects you to demand an apology. I saw Freeman a little while ago, and he says that if you don't do it, you will be driven out of the camp."

A bright spot instantly burned in the cheek of Lieut. Gregory.

"I am sorry," he replied, "that the standard of true honor is so low among the officers you mention. This eagerness to shed blood comes not from a feeling of genuine courage. It has its origin in a far lower and baser feeling. The present is no time for petty quarrels; no time to throw away life. My country needs my services, and I will hold myself in readiness to meet any demand she may make upon me, and at a moment's warning."

It was all in vain, this and repeated attempts to

induce Lieut. Gregory to resent the insult which Green had offered; he was not to be moved from his resolution.

The young officer, who had so far laid aside the character of a gentleman as to give an unprovoked insult to a fellow officer, emboldened by the forbearance—cowardice he was pleased to call it—of Gregory, and incited by others who had no more honor nor principle than himself, took occasion, a few days afterward, to commit a still greater outrage. Happening to be in company with several officers, among whom was Lieut. Gregory, he made several highly insulting remarks, evidently intending that Gregory should apply them to himself. The officer took no notice of them, until the words "coward" and "poltroon" were used.

"I presume," said Gregory, turning suddenly toward Green, "that you mean to apply the words to me."

"If you please," was tauntingly answered.

The parties were sitting in a room, on the first floor, the windows of which were open. Without saying anything more, or exhibiting much excitement, Gregory arose, catching hold of the young officer, pitched him out of the window!

"Served him right," said one.

"Now for sport," cried another, rubbing his hands with delight.

"We'll see who wears the white feather," muttered a third.

In a moment or two, Green came bounding back into the room, with a face like scarlet, and a volley of bitter oaths rolling from his tongue. He had drawn his sword, and was brandishing it madly over his head.

"Defend yourself!" he cried, advancing toward Gregory.

Three or four of those present interfered at this crisis, and succeeded in getting Green out of the room. Lieut. Gregory soon after retired to his quarters. As he expected, a young officer called upon him with a challenge from Green during the next hour. On glancing over it, Gregory handed it back, saying, as he did so—

"My life is needed for another service than this."

"Am I to understand that you will not give the satisfaction one gentleman has a right to demand of another?" inquired the second, with a slight curl of his lip.

"I wish you to understand," replied Lieut. Gregory, "that I decline fighting with Lieut. Green. I have already given him all the satisfaction to which he is entitled.

The officer bowed and retired with a haughty, half contemptuous air. The fact that Gregory had declined a challenge from Lieut. Green was soon all over the encampment. Some of the officers took one side and some the other. In the meantime, the bellicose individual who had been so unceremoniously as well as so unexpectedly thrown out of the window, gave forth the intention that he would shoot Gregory down in the street "like a dog," the first time he encountered him. This, coming to the ears of the commanding officer, Green was sent for.

"This is no time for private quarrels, my young friend," said the general, mildly, yet firmly. "We are in an enemy's country, few in numbers, and far from being as well equipped for war as we should be. Every life is of value, and more particularly the life of every officer. I cannot afford, therefore, to have any member of my staff shot down in the street. To-morrow we commence our march further into this territory, and further still from the reach of reinforcements. The bravery of each man in the army is likely to be put to a severer trial than it has yet received; and you, Lieut. Green, can in no better way show yourself an honorable and brave officer, than by doing your duty to your country in the presence of her enemies. I trust to have the pleasure of mentioning you in my next despatches to the government."

The young officer retired, feeling severely this rebuke so mildly given; and also considerable disappointment at the intimation that they were still to penetrate further into the country, and thus invite an attack from an overwhelming force led on by a military chief the most distinguished in Mexico.

"It is madness to wish so much," he said, to a brother officer, when the order was promulgated.

"The old man knows what he is about," replied the other. "If he's ready to lead, I'm ready to follow."

"Oh, so am I, as to that. Still, there is such a thing as carrying bravery on to desperation."

The officer shrugged his shoulders in a way that Green did not altogether like.

"And so," he added, "the old man wouldn't let you take a crack at Gregory."

"No; but my time will come. I never forgive an injury. He's got to fight me, or I'll shoot him as I would a dog."

"That is, if you don't get shot by the Mexicans between this and San Luis, which I think more than likely."

"Why so?"

"They're a blood-thirsty set, and fight like devils, sometimes. Of course we're bound to whip them, but not without the sacrifice of many lives. So far, our victories have been attended with a heavy loss of officers, and this will be the history of the whole campaign. You are as likely to be picked off as any. The bravest, you know, are even most exposed to danger."

On the next day, the army left Monterey and commenced its march. Lieut. Gregory felt, in various instances, the re-action of his conduct in having refused to accept the challenge of Green. Some of the officers really believed that he had declined the meeting through cowardice, and felt a contempt for him that they were at no pains to conceal; while two or three, who really possessed but a small portion of true courage, saw a good opportunity for displaying their contempt of consequences something in the spirit of the ass who kicked his heels in the face of the sick lion.

At length, the little handful of troops, in their progress toward the interior, found themselves in the immediate vicinity of an army numbering over twenty

thousand men. A counsel of officers was called, and the various individuals composing the staff were asked for an opinion as to the best policy to pursue. It was a moment of trial. The little army was scarcely a fourth in number to that of Santa Anna, and had, moreover, been crippled by the withdrawal of some of its most effective artillery, a portion of the armament which had, hitherto, done such good service against the Mexicans. To risk a battle, appeared, to many of the officers, little less than madness. Among those who advised falling back upon Monterey, was Green. Gregory being asked for his opinion, replied briefly--

"If we retire to Monterey, we will have to continue our march to the Rio Grande."

Several of the officers looked at him with surprise, and some with a too evident contempt.

"Truly said," was the remark of General Taylor. "Our enemy is fatigued by a long march, and exhausted through want of provisions. We are fresh, and our men possess all the spirit that comes from recent victories. If we retire the enemy will have time to refresh himself, and gain the confidence which fatigue and hunger take from the mind; while our little army will feel that it is not invincible. At Buena Vista we have the best position for a battle that can be found, and to meet the enemy here is our only chance of victory. If we go back to Monterey, as Lieut. Gregory has just said, we must retire to the Rio Grande. That consequence is inevitable. Six thousand men cannot contend, successfully, with over twenty thousand, unless there be some extraordinary advantages on their side. In our position, in the freshness of our troops, and in the moral power which repeated successes gives, we now have these advantages. Retire, and they are all lost to us."

But many officers still urged a retreat. To meet Santa Anna with such a handful of men, was only to be sure defeat. Better retire to Monterey or Camargo, and await re-inforcements.

"Up to this time," remarked Lieut. Gregory, "we have always advanced. Let us begin to retreat, and our men will lose their confidence. We must risk this battle, or re-cross the frontier."

"Undoubtedly correct!" said the general. "We must fight to-morrow. Everything depends on this engagement."

The commander was resolute in his determination, and on the next day, the memorable battle of Buena Vista began. Every one is familiar with its progress and successful termination in favor of the American arms. It was a miracle in warfare.

During the hottest of the fight, Lieut. Green was in command of a position, the maintenance of which was of the utmost importance. Men were falling around him like grain beneath the stroke of the

reaper's sickle. Suddenly there came riding down upon him a troop of Mexican lancers. At the sight, his wavering courage fled, and, giving an order to his men to retire across a ravine to a more secure position, he turned and left undefended a place through which hundreds of the enemy could pour, and gain an advantage that would, in all probability, decide the fate of the day. It so happened, that Lieut. Gregory was fighting, bravely, at a short distance from the position given to Green to defend, and witnessed its abandonment. Instantly perceiving the disastrous consequences that must follow, he sprang before his men, and, in a voice heard far above the roar of battle, ordered them to advance and meet the approaching troop.

When Lieut. Green reached his place of greater safety, and turned his eyes upon the point he had left, he was astonished to see the Mexican lancers falling back under a sharp fire, which was repeated ere they could recover themselves. The whole troop, instead of effecting the intended breach, were thrown into disorder. He was still further surprised to discern, in the leader of the little band of heroes who had taken the place deserted by his command, the officer he had so wantonly attempted to disgrace.

This particular part of the field was under the eye of General Taylor. He had seen the abandonment of so important a point, and had sent an aid with orders to one of his most trusty officers to repair, if possible, the disadvantage, by throwing into the breach a large body of effective troops. But ere the aid could deliver the order, the presence of mind and heroism of Lieut. Gregory had rendered the movement unnecessary.

On the day after the battle, the general in command sent for Lieut. Green.

"I am sorry," said he, "that I cannot make honorable mention of you in my despatches to the government, as I had hoped to do. The laurels you might have won, will rest on the brows of Lieut. Gregory, who has proved himself a brave officer. But for his courage and presence of mind, our whole army might have suffered a disastrous defeat. And now, my young friend, take with you this advice. If you wish to gain a reputation for bravery, seek for it in defending and sustaining your country when the time comes to risk your life in battle; not in depriving her of the service of her brave officers by shooting them in private quarrels."

The young officer retired from the quarters of his general deeply abashed. At the close of the war Gregory was made captain by brevet, as a reward for his distinguished bravery; while Lieut. Green retired from the service under a sense of disgrace that could not be overcome.

SIREN; OR, THE HEART'S TRIALS.

BY KATE CAMPBELL

CHAPTER I.

"Unthinking, idle, wild, and young,
I laugh'd, and talk'd and dance'd, and sung;
And proud of health, of frolic vain,
Dream not of sorrow, care, or pain;
Concluding in those hours of glee
That all the world was made for me."

— PRINCESS AMELIA.

"WHAT do you think, Fanny darling?" wrote Siren Orton to her friend Fanny Weldon, "I am beside myself! I can scarcely write, and yet I must steal a few moments to tell you the news. I am not going back to school! Jubilate! Farewell to Madame P—— and the whole tribe of *mademoiselles*! farewell without a sigh or a tear. I am so happy! I should be perfectly so were it not for thoughts of you and Lizzy, and Anne, and all the rest. I shall miss you! but you too must coax to come home, for it is perfectly nonsensical to stay at school so long: why I am younger than any of you, and I am most sixteen.

"I wonder how I came to get leave to leave? I'm sure I cannot remember, I am so delirious with joy! Only Frank and Aunt Florence wanted it so, and Uncle Charles and Aunt Lucy didn't—you see which party proved the strongest.

"And then I am coming out—actually coming out, this winter; and shall go to balls and parties, and to the opera and concerts, and shall walk and ride and drive forever. Oh, isn't it delightful? Why I am going to the opera this evening for the first time with Frank! You ought to see Cousin Frank. He has just come home from Europe, and is so handsome—such splendid eyes—and he is so noble, so tall, and so grave, and yet so full of mischief. Is not that strange? But it is true. I felt quite afraid of him at first, for he has such odd ways; but I love him dearly now; only I wish he would not tease me so.

"Can you read what I write? My hand trembles so I cannot hold my pen. It is quite a nervous affair, this coming out business. Frank says I am to make a sensation. I hope so, I am sure. Who wants to play a stupid part? Not I—nor you either. I shall not soon forget all the scenes of school-life. It makes me really sad to think I shall not see you for so long: but I will though, for you must come home—if you do not, I shall think you are perfectly content to be separated. Pshaw! there's Frank calling to know if I am ready, and I haven't done the first thing yet. What shall I do?"

The little lady sprang from her chair and stood quickly before her glass, her white fingers fluttering through her wavy curls like "snow-flakes."

It was never a very long task to arrange that lovely hair, which would curl bewitchingly despite all obstacles; but then there was a multitude of trifles to attend to, and the dress was so—so—something was the matter.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Siren; and then her face brightened again, as looking up she espied Aunt Lucy's pale, placid, live-for-others face.

"Oh, Aunt Lucy! is that you? How kind! you have come to help me, I know, and——"

"Siren!" again called out Cousin Frank from the stairs.

"Oh, dear—dear! how impatient men are!" Siren's sunny face was most dismally beclouded.

"But this dress, Si! it will never meet."

"Oh, yes, Aunt Lucy! pull it, make it, it must, it is not very tight—there, now, I knew it would! Now where is my fan and gloves and bouquet? I am going to do like the lady of whom Frank was telling us."

"Siren!"

"Coming, Frank, directly. The lady of whom Frank was telling us yesterday; who threw her bouquet at the Prima Donna, and hit her right in the face. Poor thing! how badly she must have felt. But I shall not; I shall laugh and say, Frank did it. Be so good, aunt, as to fasten this bracelet. Thank you. Oh, I had almost forgotten my handkerchief—terrible thing that would have been—what should I have done when the affecting part came, and I wanted to cry? There, now—don't laugh, Aunt Lucy, for I'm in sober earnest! Good night—give me a kiss!" and the giddy creature bounded from the room.

At the foot of the stairs stood Cousin Frank—a tall, handsome young man of seven and twenty; with just now rather an alarming frown on his brow.

"You little gipsy!" he said, taking her in his arms as he spoke, and placing her on the high, hall table, "what do you mean by keeping me waiting this way? Do you know that we have lost that magnificent overture?"

"Oh, Frank, please let me down!" pleaded Siren, uncertain whether to laugh or cry, and in sorrow for her little head.

"Answer me first."

"I did get ready soon! I'm sure I was not long! but I forgot it was late; and, and—let me down, Frank, that's a dear cousin," and the girl stooped and pressed a loving kiss on the lofty brow beneath.

"Now, coaxer!" he exclaimed; but he looked pleased for all, as he bore her laughing gaily to the carriage.

CHAPTER II.

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“——— When I look

On one so fair, I must believe that Heaven
Sent her in kindness, that our hearts might waken
To their own loveliness, and lift themselves
By such an adoration from a dark
And grovelling world.”

—
WHAT was she?—a witch?—a fay?—a sprite? Each, all, with the appendage of a loving, trusting woman's heart! oh, she *was* beautiful.

They called her Siren in her cradle days, though at first they had given her another name; but her baby eyes beamed so brightly, and the “love-light” shone so warmly there, that the embers of romance which time had not yet extinguished in the parents' hearts, discarded the soberer name, and Siren became their star and dream. She was but one left among many budding blossoms; why should they not love her? And they bore her watchfully on their hearts till the angel of death took them away to their last, bright abode.

Peacefully would Mrs. Orton have departed had she not known that her beautiful, passionate, sensitive child, would before long be intrusted to the care of one, who, though a sister, and an only one, she felt was inadequate to take charge of her peculiar disposition.

But as to that sister, Siren must go, she could only hope that the lessons already received, would in some measure protect her from a system of education directly opposed to her own.

She died—and Siren was removed immediately to the house of her aunt, and in the new, gay, brilliant scenes which surrounded her, the child gradually became lost to all painful recollections, and involved in a dream, whose fairy coloring had not dimmed, nor lessened as yet, though years had rolled over her head since her irreparable loss.

Sent to school of course; a favorite there from her beauty, brightness of mood, and sunny temper; spoiled, petted on all hands, when she came home for the vacations what wonder if all her thoughts, her ideas, her experience “turned to brightness.” Now, however, she was to advance a step in life. Not quietly, with circumspection and foreknowledge, but boldly; with confidence in greater happiness than she had yet known. Not only in disbelief, but perfect ignorance of the dark shadows which fall on all. Poor Siren! God save thee!

One evening Siren stood at the door of a spacious drawing-room, where light and music dwelt on the enticing air. She paused with a new and sudden feeling before she entered. She was fairy-like in form, and one elfin foot was lightly poised on tiptoe, while the other glanced from her dress in hesitation it would seem. She could not cross the threshold of those gay rooms without a serious, solemn thought on the untried future. Then with a smile at the sad fancy, she bounded forward with a low, light laugh; and seating herself at the piano, strove to drown reflection in melody. But she was alone; and shadows rose again in her dreaming eyes, and large tears came unbidden to those thick, golden-tipped lashes. She

felt nervous, tremulous—afraid to be alone; so she stole timidly out to nestle beside her kind Aunt Lucy.

By and bye, those brilliant rooms filled with company, who gathered round the young *debutante*, and bade her welcome to their ranks with gay, deceitful smiles, and tempting pictures of a life glad and beautiful, but which found no echo in their cold and weary hearts.

The fair girl was very happy, and murmured of her hopes and fears with the trust of childhood; hanging always for protection on the strong arm of Cousin Frank. This evening he displayed only the serious part of his character, and, bending over the buoyant creature beside him, revealed by the troubled depths of his dark eyes that a fount of affection, deeper than that of a brother, was waking to life within him.

And Siren! alas! before that evening passed, by the tremulous color in that rounded cheek, by the wavering sparkle in those wondrous eyes, by the quivering of those bright lips, and the depth of those siren tones; might be told the beginning of change in that young heart. Pray Heaven it may but end here, and she will yet do well!

CHAPTER III.

“I fear thy gentle loveliness,
Thy witching tone and air,
And thine eyes beseeching earnestness,
May be to thee a snare;
For silver stars may purely shine,
The waters stainless flow;
But they who kneel at woman's shrine,
Breathe on it as they bow.
Ye may fling back the gift again;
But the crushed flower will leave a stain.”

—
WILLIS.

Six months later. Yes, six months later, reader, and again a bright room lit up warmly! But now it is summer, and the lights are soft and subdued; and the silver moonlight mingles here and there—creeping in stealthily through the plants in the conservatory, and flashing in one broad sheet through the low, opened casement. The polished columns are wreathed with fragrant flowers, through which the evening wind breathes its low music; naught else disturbing the silence: and we had almost thought the room without occupant, but for that low, faint sigh, sure token of the presence of some sorrowing heart. Ah, there is the queen of this enchanted scene! no wonder unperceived before; so white her garments, so more than white her fair face—her fragile arms outstretched and wound despairingly round the cold marble of the column! She moves not—does not breathe perceptibly. Can it be—oh, no, surely not!—our Siren, the gay, joyous Siren?

Alas! a change had come over the spirit of her dream. She scarce remembered how six months ago she had burst from her chrysalis, radiant, the admired of all. Such a long life she had lived since then; and gained so much experience, she thought, poor child!

She had learned to love. That was but natural. One worthy of her: her only fear lest she was not worthy of him. How she worshipped her, Ernest Sinclair! How she worshipped him—in her heart. Her eyes, alas! were still too often lit with the glow

of vanity; and she could not bring herself to regard with indifference the homage of the crowd. How delightful to live by the breath of admiration! But in her quiet morning room, with the fresh, pure air about her, and fevered thought at rest, she would say, "thee, and only thee, Ernest," and resigning her small, fair hand to his affectionate clasp, sit contented for hours, her head nestling from time to time upon his shoulder, her clear eyes raised to his. But when the evening came, and Siren stood before her glass, and met there the sparkling gaze of her beautiful semblance, faster and faster her pulses beat, and that baby brain unconsciously laid out the plot of the evening's romance. "I am not a coquette," she would say to herself, but she felt she was; felt that she was giving way to a vanity which must before long be checked, or bring deep unhappiness.

Yet volatile and thoughtless as she was, she had her moments of reflection; and it was at one of these periods we have seen her.

Ernest had that day left her in anger, and for the first time. He had expressed his displeasure at her trifling conduct the night before; and Siren had retorted, quickly—angrily—vehemently! Amazed at the display of anger witnessed, he hurried away sorrowfully; and she had let him go without a word. He the noble, the generous, the forgiving, who was so far above the common offences of mortality, that Siren had never ceased to wonder at his love for her—so weak and faulty as she felt herself to be.

She compressed her lips in agony. But while the still small voice strove for a hearing, another spirit was warring in her heart—a spirit of defiance. Would Ernest expect her to humble herself to him? "Never!" and the firmly closed lips, and nervous stamp of the small foot, gave token of a quick re-action. All his noble qualities, so late in her mind's eye, faded; and instead arose only the discolored picture her imagination presented Ernest, proud, haughty, cold—herself abject, seeking, striving. She whose lightest word was imperative with her admirers.

"Never, never!" she repeated—"he shall see I am not dependant on him for happiness!"

Still she stood there, pressing her fevered brow closely to the twining, dewy flowers—and thought. She looked back over the past. It was a short time: but what a court of pride and wealth, talent and beauty she had gathered round her in her bright career! Was she happier for it? And she half asked the question of her heart, and then shrank from the low dissenting plaint sent forth.

Away, far away her childhood's sunny hours loomed out indistinctly; and she remembered with the confused recollection of a dream the happy, careless castles she had built upon their firm foundations. Then she strove to put away the memories which came thronging fast upon her, for time and place assumed each moment more distinctness; and she wished not to remember all.

Amid the gay groups who crowded that stately mansion that night, Siren moved like a floating star, tremulous and bright! She would not look at Ernest, though she knew he stood near with folded arms and eyes fixed sadly upon her.

She struggled bravely to be gay—she succeeded in the appearance. But to an acute observer the bitterness within was marked by her wild and thrilling laugh, which rang out startlingly at intervals. Struck with her fevered movements, her aunt put out her hand to stay the giddy creature, who flashed by on the arm of a noble suitor.

"Why, Siren!" but the next moment she had parted from the lively baronet, and was kneeling with the grace of a falling snow-wreath the centre of a small group, chatting gaily, and weaving the white a pure, pale garland of jessamine. "Not for *me*!" she cried, as some one strove to fasten it in her bright locks. "Not for *me*," she repeated, with a shudder. And then she rose and placed it gently on the placid brow of Aunt Lucy.

Anon, she hung on the arm of one who bent over her till the spicy breath breaking like incense from her red lips fanned his changing cheek; and when as into the sleeping moonlight he drew her, and his pulse beat fast and boldly, and he stooped in a daring moment to imprint a kiss on her cold brow, she was gone! away at the far end of the room, amidst light and music, her gay laugh breaking mockingly on his ear.

"Siren, are you mad?" exclaimed Frank Lee, sternly, seizing her by her delicate wrist until she screamed with pain.

"Mad, Frank! Oh, no! only happy!" and she stood out from him with burning cheek and flashing eye, all radiant in her glorious beauty.

Poor Frank! he withdrew into the shade and gazed at the unconscious girl with a dark fire in his eye. He would not own, even to himself, that her image reigned supreme in his manly breast. He knew not that she loved another, for he had been absent when that fact must have been disclosed to his jealous heart, and returned only on this evening, he saw but her coquetry; and that alone goaded, irritated him almost beyond endurance.

And when that evening bore its record away, the Siren who had made men fools for hours, turned her to her luxurious sleeping apartment, and sinking on her knees, wept wildly over the part just played, and resting her head upon her folded arms, sobbed the sad night away.

Morning brought her fresh sorrow—poor child! A note from Ernest—a sad farewell—a withdrawal from his engagement to her: brief, but not cold: no upbraiding, but much pain; agony almost—that she loved him not, "but as one among many." He spoke of his inability to witness her, as his wife, caring as much for the many as for him. Yes, he must part—before the task became too hard to perform. He blamed her not—only his own "selfish, exacting heart!" She would "soon forget one so selfish."

Poor Siren! did pride uphold her now, and compensate for this sacrifice? She read it once—twice—shed no tears, spoke not! but clasping the fatal missive tightly with her small fingers, sank back cold and inanimate.

Aunt Lucy and Aunt Lee came in after a while to rouse their pet, and thus they found her. While Aunt Lucy strove to restore her, Mrs. Lee drew the note

away from the relaxed fingers and read it—then deposited it in her bosom.

It had been a favorite plan of her's to wed her son and Siren; and she had exerted her self-command to its utmost extent to conceal her chagrin at its failure. She could not feel sorry now that something had happened to part the lovers, and make her plan once more feasible. She believed affairs of the heart were easily cured, and trusted to future finesse to work her will. In the meantime she determined to exact silence from her husband and sister on the subject of the engagement which had been so abruptly broken off; for Frank would never learn that out of the house which was known only to themselves.

Siren revived at last. But she was slightly—talked incoherently—strangely—wandering back to infancy, and detailing childish scenes with a voice heart-rending to hear. Her illness was sad and long; but her nurses were tender and affectionate; none more so than Cousin Frank—noble Cousin Frank! He sat by her bedside, and bathed her fevered brow with a woman's tenderness; soothed, loved her.

She waked to her senses calm and quiet; she convalesced in the same frame of mind. She did not refer to the past by words, nor seem to by thoughts. The physician shook his head over her passive state. Some dreadful blow had produced her illness he did not doubt. Something must be done to rouse her: society—travelling.

So the whole family set off for Saratoga and Niagara.

When they returned, late in the fall, Siren was the affianced wife of Frank Lee.

"He asked me," she had murmured to herself. "How could I refuse him? So noble—so good—my darling cousin! So tender and kind to me! it does not much signify who one marries, does it?"

Poor Siren! what she ever woke? It was plain to be seen that travelling had not had the effect desired.

off:

CHAPTER IV.

"'Tis Spring and yet I only sigh—
My pleasures all are flown away;
Oh! who can tell me where, and why?"

We copy some leaves from Siren's diary, and leave them to tell their own tales.

"Aunt bade me go to rest soon, for she said I must be weary. Oh! so I am—of life—and sleep—and awakening! I cannot rest now under this weight of misery. I marvel at the ease with which but an hour ago I sustained my part. I am sure I could not do so now. Oh! how glad I was to escape from those bright rooms, they so reminded me of those in which I beheld him for the last time; and then so changed—so cold! I know I was wicked—mad—foolish—trifling—yet surely I did not deserve to be relinquished so quickly. I wonder why that dreadful blow produced so little change in my conduct. Yet why do I ask? I know my pride prevented me from turning from a life I now loathe. To-night C— drew me away from the crowd, and fixing his calm, earnest eyes on me, whispered—

"Surely, I was not born for this!
I feel a loftier mood
Of general impulse, high resolve,
Steal o'er my solitude."

"I tried to laugh! but he regarded me so seriously, yet timidly, with his almost holy gaze, that tears started to my aching eyes, and I turned away.

"Such a being was my Ernest—only more pure, more perfect! Ernest—Ernest! come back, or I die! Do you know, Ernest, that they want me to wed another? Him I used to love so warmly? my Cousin Frank? Ah, if you know, you care not; and I shall soon be sacrificed, for I cannot struggle much longer against their wishes! I feel so weak—so utterly unable to act! I only wish to lie down and die."

Here are some extracts of a later date.

"What did Uncle Charles call me just now? Mrs. Lee? Surely not! Oh, no! I am Siren yet—not married? Ah, if I could only think so! but I remember too well how we stood before the altar and vowed to love till death—till *death*—will it ever come? How wretched I am, and yet I look happy! I know I must—for none seem to perceive my misery. If I could only weep—could only break through this dreadful calm—this hollow peace!

"And Ernest, they tell me, has gone to a Southern clime for his health. He will die; and I shall see him no more; for where his pure spirit goes, mine cannot follow laden thus with sin. Oh! for what have I bartered my all on earth, and *more* than all in Heaven? I cannot tell—my soul gives back no answer. All is dark, vague, and hopeless!"

We copy from another page of this book of the heart.

"I feel calmer to-day than I have done for a long, long time. I think I must have been in a dream since I married Frank. I remember no particulars—nothing clearly—only that Frank told me one day—and often, how proud he was of me; and that he has been very, very kind! Kinder than I deserve, who can give back but the affection of a sister, although I am his wife. And now I remember how very much I have been flattered, and followed, and fêted since then; but I do not care for such homage now. Oh! if I could only cast the past two years from my history, and go back to the time when I was simply Siren, and so happy.

"But C— told me, this morning, that none were happy always; that all had their trials: and then he talked so beautifully about how our Father chastened us, to bring us nearer Him, that all became clear to me, and I wanted to love that God who has done so much for us. I have never thought of Him since mother died! I wonder why, ungrateful heart! C—'s conversation made me wonder also, how I ever became so weak as to wed with one I loved but as a brother. I know that married as I am, I ought not to have asked the question; but I did simply to try and remember why it was so. I wish I could clear away the mist from the past! I cannot think. I only know I was sick and feeble, and they prayed me to wed him; and I yielded without clearly knowing what I was about. But now that it is so, I will try to fill the part of a true wife, casting away

sinful, repining thoughts. So help me God! Strengthen me, make me worthy of my noble husband's love."

CHAPTER V.

"I'm weary of the crowded ball: I'm weary of the mirth Which never lifts itself above the grosser things of earth. I'm weary of the flatterer's tone; its music is no more. And eye and lip may answer not its meaning as before: I'm weary of the heartless throng, of being deemed as one Whose spirit kindles only in the blaze of fashion's sun.

I speak in very bitterness, for I have deeply felt The mockery of the hollow shrine at which my spirit knelt. Mine is the requiem of years in reckless folly passed, The wail above departed hopes on a frail venture cast; The vain regret that steals above the wreck of squandered hours, Like the sighing of the Autumn wind over the faded flowers."

J. G. WHITTIER.

Two years after the above was written, our Siren was a widow—alone in this wide world. She sorrowed, yet not without consolation. She had been, what night and morning she prayed God to make her, "a faithful, tender, and true wife." Frank saw that over the young life of his beautiful Siren hung a sad shadow; but he knew not—fortunately guessed not the cause.

"Siren has always been taught to consider me as a brother," he would say to his yearning, jealous heart, whenever a suspicion crossed his mind that she loved not so ardently as he. "She does not feel the intense passion which fills me always." And so thinking, his love grew stronger; more devoted. Around her were gathered "affection's ministers," in all the shapes which wealth, taste, and love could desire. Her life might have passed like a fairy tale but for its *remembrances*!

When her husband died she was beside him, her hand clasped in his; and his last sigh was breathed out on her bosom. And when all was over, and she alone with the dead, she bent over the glorious casket which had enshrined his noble soul, with passionate tears and bitter wailing.

"Oh, Frank, dearest Frank!" she exclaimed, "why did I not love you more as you deserved to be loved?"

But closed forever were those splendid eyes which ever watched on her slightest motion; and hushed the deep, rich voice of melody, which ever answered in love's sweetest cadences her every breath! She felt all this in its bitterness, felt that in death he had become dearer than in life, and was *still*.

"Plead with me no more, dear Aunt Florence!" she wrote, on being solicited to see more society, some time after her husband's death, "I cannot go back to the great world, its light is so glaring, and I am but a weak, sinful child, and cannot struggle with its strong waters! No, dearest aunt, henceforth I shall live retired from the world as much as possible. Aunt Lucy has promised to be my companion, my monitor; and I shall strive to atone as much as in me lies, for my woful misuse of the powers my Father bestowed on me.

"Do not call me capricious! I am doing what I think is right, and what my conscience approves. Is not my husband dead?—my hopes dead?—my heart would die I to go back and plunge into the wild

life I once led! Aunt, aunt! you know the fatal warning I received there: you cannot urge further. Farewell then—love me as ever! I can never forget your kindness: you will be kind still? my own aunt!"

This letter Siren had written from Linnmere, a country-seat, whither she had retired after her husband's decease. It was in answer to one from her Aunt Lee, urging her to come to town. But Siren had experienced so much more of real peace since her retirement, that she shrank from all renewal of the gay scenes of her first, wild youth. But Aunt Florence, though she seemingly acquiesced in her decision, by no means dropped her scheme.

The autumn and winter at Linnmere glided away peacefully to its inmates. There was much to be done in the walks of usefulness, and oh, how new, the pure, chaste delight unspringing in Siren's heart! Aunt Lucy, ever good, remained the same, but Siren seemed lifted midway between earth and Heaven.

"Do you not know that book by heart?" said her aunt, one day, with gentle playfulness, observing her poring over the Bible.

"Oh, that I did!" was the heartfelt reply; "it surely is the best of books, for it has given me peace!" and smiles, and tears of joy contended for the mastery in her sweet face.

The spring and summer passed, and when the autumn leaves fell again, a travelling carriage rolled up the broad avenue at Linnmere, and stopped before the noble old mansion. The door was flung open, and Aunt Florence sprang up the marble steps: Siren was at the window. She rose hastily, with an expression of pain in her countenance.

"What is the matter?" exclaimed Aunt Lucy.

"My aunt!" was the faintly murmured reply, "oh, I dread evil!—I dread evil!"

"Well, my little nun-like sister, how art thou?" exclaimed Mrs. Lee, entering quickly, and saluting the pale cheek of Aunt Lucy. "And Siren, too," advancing gaily; but Siren lay cold and senseless upon the glowing carpet; like a crushed lily.

"Poor child! it must have been your sudden appearance!" said Aunt Lucy, lifting the slight form of her pet in her arms, and bearing her to the open window.

"Not so," was the angry reply. "I knew when she took this whim in her head it would undermine her health. Siren required the sun: and she has moped here till she has almost withered away."

When Siren revived, she was alone with Aunt Lucy.

"Has she gone?" she whispered, faintly.

"No, dearest, but she will go when she has had a short conversation with you. Are you able to hear it now?"

"Oh, no—not now—not at all."

"Dear Siren, it must be—when you are strong enough."

The girl made no reply, but shuddering closed her eyes. When she again opened them, Aunt Florence was beside her, and pressed a warm kiss upon her pallid cheek.

"How are you, dear? Better, I hope!" and in her own peculiar, gentle, wily way she led the

conversation to indifferent topics, till the color bloomed again in the transparent cheek, and light returned to the drooping eyes.

"And now, Siren, dear, let me talk to you about yourself for a few moments; now that we have discussed common-places. I have come to take you back to that circle of which you were, and will be, the brightest ornament!"

"I cannot go!" was the quick reply.

"Just wait, my child—and refuse when I have done talking. I see plainly that this place does not agree with you. You were born to shine! Come hither," and Mrs. Lee led the girl directly before a tall mirror empaneled in the wall. "Look you there, girl!"

Siren mechanically raised her eyes. She blushed deeply.

"Ah, now!" laughed her aunt, "you blush not only at the praise, but the sight of your own loveliness."

And truly Siren might have been forgiven the glow of vanity, which once more warmed her heart as she stood there in all her subdued, yet undimmed beauty! Her loosened hair fell over her shoulders in wavy masses of soft, light brown, enwoven with gold. And her complexion, so delicate, glowing, transparent; the blue veins gleaming through the pure skin; the ripe lips parted, and quivering with contending emotions.

"Siren, awake, love! remember the past—Ernest!"

At the sudden mention of that name Siren started convulsively. "Oh, aunt!" covering her mouth with her slender fingers, "stop! stop! I am a widow—you are childless! remember that also—let, let me go!"

"Forgive, forgive, dearest! but a moment longer. My peerless Siren, know you not that Ernest, so long, so dearly loved, is returned—is in the city?"

"Aunt, aunt," gasped the girl, "you sport with me: it cannot be—it—"

"My child, I do not sport. He is there. Come with me once more; you know a word would chain him captive."

"I know it not," murmured the girl, sadly. "He despises me—I cannot."

"You can—you must," began Aunt Florence, but Siren put her aside, and glided swiftly from the room. She dared not remain longer—she feared for her weak heart.

Sadly sat Siren among her books and flowers. Sadly she listened to the sound of departing wheels.

"She is gone," she whispered to herself, "and I am here. I who might have gone too; and now—"

"Ernest!" she uttered thrillingly. "Ernest!" and she stretched out her yearning arms; then as a sense of her desolation came upon her, she sank upon the floor and wept bitterly.

Aunt Lucy, a few weeks later, bent over the wasting form of her pining charge, and pressing her lips to the faded cheek, whispered—

"Come, love, rouse thyself—this is not right."

"Only let me live my own way now, aunt: it will not be for much longer;" and she held up her small, thin hand with a faint smile.

Aunt Lucy took that hand in hers, and winding her

arm around the girl's waist, seated herself beside her. Then she drew the weary head to her bosom, and taking out a small pocket Bible, opened to that ever comforting, ever sweet, fourteenth chapter of St. John. As she read tears gathered beneath the veined lids of the girl, and fell slowly, one by one, upon her folded hands. The look of hopeless despondency passed from her countenance, and one of sorrow and contrition re-placed it.

"Oh, aunt, bless you—bless you—aid me by your prayers—how sadly I have wandered—my heart grows light again."

"Always, ever, my own dear love. Now I know you. In this world we must have tribulation—but what then? It is but a little while."

"Oh! yes—but a *little* while!" echoed the girl, with clasped hands and beaming eyes; "and then, then—" her voice failed through tears, but the transparent fingers pointed triumphantly Heavenward.

CHAPTER VI.

"Think not, beloved, time can break

The spell around us cast,

Or absence from my bosom take

The memory of the past;

My love is not that silvery mist

From Summer flowers by sunbeams kissed,

Too fugitive to last—

A fadeless flower, it still retains

The brightness of its earlier plains."

It was an afternoon in Indian summer, and Siren Lee sat alone in the drawing-room at Linnere. The soft, hazy air around lay in clouds of dreamy sunshine: pure and mild, the breeze from the lawn swept into the room and fanned the delicate cheek, where a soft rose-tint was blooming into life again. She had thrown aside her work and was bending over a volume of "L. E. L." Aunt Lucy came into the room for a moment, and stooping over her shoulder, whispered—

"Put away that book, dear Si! it will not fit thee for thy life."

"I know it, aunt; and yet I must indulge myself a few moments, this luxurious day."

"And pay the penalty of a wounded conscience, and an awakening of old desires afterward," said Aunt Lucy, sadly.

"Aunt is right—and yet I cannot help it," whispered Siren to herself, turning again to the book. She paused at the words—

"Life, vain life!

The bitter and the worthless—

Wherefore here do thy remembrances intrude!"

She shuddered and grew pale. Her head drooped upon her slender hands, and she sat long in sorrowful meditation.

A single horseman passed the window. She started at the sound, but he had vanished from her sight: yet she felt a strange, unaccountable thrill running through her frame. She rose and busied herself about some work; but it dropped from her hands. She tried to read: to sing—but her voice failed her. She rose again and left the room scarce conscious of so doing, yet listening nervously to every breath.

In the meantime, the horseman who had passed her

window, had alighted on the other side of the house, and soon stood before Aunt Lucy, who was passing through the hall.

One might have thought it was a lover of the gentle old lady, for she sank trembling upon a seat, and raised her hands imploringly—

"Mr. Sinclair—Ernest!" it was all she could say; but her looks were eloquent, yet anxious.

It was indeed Ernest Sinclair, who stood there before her. Not as she had seen him in former times—calm, composed in mien; but looking thin, pale, harassed—wild in his movements.

He took her hand in his burning one, and said almost incoherently—

"Forgive me—forgive me for intruding. I could bear my misery alone no longer! You must sympathize with me. *She*—is she alive? But I know she is, and well, and happy. While I am in torments insufferable—indescribable. Tell me—talk to me—say something about her, Aunt Lucy. She might have loved me still had I not hastily thrown my chance away, fool that I was!"

"Hush, Ernest, Ernest, hush!" whispered a soft voice, as a slight, fragile figure broke through the door-way, and Siren flung herself beside him, beseeching forgiveness.

How calm he grew suddenly, while bliss superhuman overpowered him—bathed his face in light.

Murmured words of love and tenderness followed—the unsealing of two sorely tried hearts. Closely

she clung to him while he looked down upon her pale face; and the memories of other days came crowding fast upon him. Thoughts of the artless, playful, trusting girl, who first attracted his attention; thoughts of that Siren whom all bowed before and worshipped; thoughts of their mutual love—their mutual confessions; and then he durst not think of what followed, and so he bent more tenderly over the still bewitching Siren, and wondered how she was so changed, yet the same. They did not speak of what each had suffered. They read *all* without the aid of words.

A few weeks and Siren was alone no more.

Yet amid her joy the roses of health bloomed but faintly on her young cheek.

How soon affection discovered this, and as Ernest pressed his wife to his bosom, he spoke of their wanderings in "smiling France and sunny Italy;" and brightly beamed our Siren's eyes at the thought.

They departed—faithful Aunt Lucy still accompanying them.

A brief and happy year, and they had returned; and Siren, now in the full tide of her glorious beauty, and radiant with health and joy, took her high, holy place in her husband's house.

Again, as in former days, was she flattered and feted; but the fair woman had gained enough worldly wisdom to estimate these things at their value; and she ever turned true in thought, word, and deed, to her noble, noble husband.

TAKING OFF A DANDY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FAMILY FAILINGS," "THE OLD LOVE AND THE NEW," &c. &c.

[The following sketch is so spirited that we violate our usual custom, and insert it, although not by an American author: for it is not in name only that this magazine is a *national one*.]

GRACE FORRESTER was a beauty, an heiress, and a belle; she was more, she was a wit. Mischief sparkled in her eyes, and wreathed her finely chiseled lips with archly provoking smiles. She was, however, already won by Horace Leigh, although the engagement was as yet a secret. He was a young lawyer every way worthy of her; and this is exalted praise.

All the neighborhood had assembled at Leigh House, for the great ball of the season. The officers of the regiment quartered in — town were also present; and among these was Major Brandon. To describe his character would be an impossibility, for he had none: but, in a word, he has was a dandy soldier, and a professional lady-killer.

He was about thirty, the only brother of a wealthy baron, and said to be the best waltzer in the regiment; he was exactly the style of person to be admired beyond measure by people in general, and also exactly the style of person Grace Forrester delighted to quizz.

"Very fine girl, new face!" said he, to one of his brother officers.

"Fifty thousand pounder!" was the answer.

"Indeed," said Major Brandon, in an indifferent tone; he was so decidedly not a marrying man that the intelligence had no interest for him, but he admired, and asked to be introduced to her.

Grace Forrester had one weakness very unusual in a lady; she was so very conscious of her fortune that she forgot her face; and to punish the bewitching man of moustaches for having already discovered her attentions as the only heiress in the county, she resolved to affect anything that might make him feel he was wasting on her the attentions that would be so gratefully received by anybody else; her great aim was, in every way that was at all consistent with her own dignity, to disconcert the Adonis of the regiment. At last it struck her, that a stupid simplicity, for which she knew her appearance would not exactly prepare him, would be the most effectual way of amusing herself at his expense.

Grace had a horror of officers, so many of them had proposed to her.

With the first turn of the waltz she discovered that he must pique himself on his dancing; and accordingly declared "that their style was so different she was afraid she could not manage to dance with him, she thought they had better sit down."

"What a lovely bouquet," said Major Brandon, addressing her when they were seated, in the formula with which he always began the conversation with

his partners, "such perfection of form and color; so like the person who made it."

"You have not seen our gardener, or you would hardly say that," said Grace, without a smile.

And the militaire twirled his moustache in silence; he could not make her out.

"I thought it must have been yourself; both are so beautiful," replied he, after a pause.

"Are we?" answered Grace, with great simplicity.

"Love and flowers seem made for one another," hazarded the officer.

"Yes," replied the lady, in a decided tone, "very."

"Very what?" inquired the gentleman.

"Very conveniently for conversation," answered Grace.

"Of course," replied the major, hastily; he thought her as odd as she was handsome, and did not know but that she might take him out of his depth.

"Will you take another turn?"

"Yes, if you will alter your style."

"I fear," said the handsome soldier, curling his lip, "that I can hardly do that," for the better, thought he.

"The best partner I ever had was the Prince of Civita Vecchia," said Grace, naming a young Italian of whom she thought he must have heard in town, "he danced quite differently."

And by the mortified air of the admired Major Brandon, she saw she had touched his vanity, for he, as well as herself, was aware that during the year the young foreigner had appeared like a galloping comet at all the best balls in town, he had been without a rival as a dancer.

To revenge himself, Major Brandon would not ask her where or how she met the young Italian; he doubted not that she was dying to tell him; but it was not so; the end and aim of Grace was gained.

The irresistible man was greatly annoyed; he strongly suspected that the beauty of the day did not admire him; and he determined this should not continue; so veiling his real displeasure, he put all the artillery of his usual looks and speeches into full play, all of which Grace met with a kind of stolid simplicity, which highly amused herself; and Horace, who *happening* to be standing near her several times, perceived her evident intention of annoying the dandy, smiled with secret satisfaction: at last the major gave up in despair.

His comrades, however, had noticed his ill-success, and, on their return from the ball, gave the lady killer no peace. They quizzed him, indeed, so unmercifully that he resolved, when he next met Grace, to redouble his efforts. He had never yet failed, where he determined to succeed; and when he now looked in the glass he felt certain he would yet conquer. Such a moustache, he felt, *must* conquer.

He did not have to wait long for an opportunity of meeting Grace again. The next week, there was a ball at Forrester Place; and thither went Major Brandon, with the rest of the officers. Miss Forrester had not forgotten her concealed rûmirer.

The party had passed off gaily, and dancing had, for some time, been going on, when Grace, as she passed Horace, happening to meet his look, said quietly—

"Attention!" and the little soldier-like air, with which she drew herself up, so slightly marked, that he alone could perceive it was "*impayable*."

She had given him the word of command, and he failed not to obey, greatly amused; as he saw her the next instant take the arm of Major Brandon. Horace could not resist the temptation of standing near her, challenged as he had been, to do so.

"Your grounds are very lovely, but any place would be a Paradise, with such an Eve," said the bewitching major, giving a peculiarly devoted smile from under his black moustaches.

"I beg your pardon—what did you say? I am quite deaf with a bad cold," said Grace, giving a look so blank and devoid of meaning, turning up to him such a *deaf face*, that he was quite deceived.

"Your grounds are very lovely, but any place would be a Paradise, with such an Eve!" repeated he, in the same low tone, but feeling very foolish.

"Eh!" said Grace, with her beautiful deaf face, "I really cannot hear; you speak so low!"

If the irresistible man piqued himself on one fascination more than another, it was his whisper; so these words cut him to the heart—if he had one.

The speech was in his opinion much too good to be altogether lost, he had so often found it well received, that for the third time, actually coloring with annoyance, he repeated it, this time so loud that the next couple looked at them, and the major met the sarcastic smile of his friend, Captain Bellasis.

"I'm glad you think so," answered Grace, at last, a reply of which the major could make nothing.

"A pity so much beauty should be deaf!" ejaculated the major, very slightly, indeed almost imperceptibly, pressing the hand which he was at that moment holding.

"Dead!" said Grace, in great apparent surprise, "what beauty is dead? Miss Vandeleur looked rather delicate—is she dead? poor girl?"

"Oh, no! I am not aware that any one is dead; I think you did not quite understand—"

"I am so deaf—isn't it dreadful?" answered Grace, giving him a look which demanded his utmost compassion.

"Nothing could be a defect in *you*," replied the major—he had a very remarkable way of saying *you* to all very pretty girls—it generally led them to suppose all sorts of things.

"Nothing can have any effect on me! You think I am deaf for life!" said Grace.

"I said," replied the agonized *militaire*, "I said nothing could be a defect in *you*."

"Eh?" said Grace Forrester, "what *do* you say?"

But at that moment Major Brandon danced off—he thought it a most fortunate escape.

And Grace stood there looking demure and quiet beyond her usual demeanor; but she suddenly turned her head, slightly waved her beautiful bright curls by the triumphant movement, and gave such a mischievous look at Horace, that he could not resist a smile which ended in a laugh.

And Major Brandon turned in the dance, saw the eyes of Horace Leigh fixed upon him with a satirical expression, and though he was unconscious why or wherefore, from that hour he hated him.

"If you would but speak louder!" continued Grace, to her fascinating partner, "I can hear other people."

"There are *some* things," said the major, giving a smile which showed his white teeth gleaming beautifully from under the jet black moustaches, "*some* things which can only be spoken in a low voice."

"Very true," said Grace, "but you need *not say those things!* at least till I can hear."

"It is impossible to see you, Miss Forrester, and not to feel—"

"It is your turn to dance," interrupted the lady.

"You were saying something?" inquired she, when he returned, and this question, which he felt convinced she never could have asked if she had understood what he said, perfectly confounded the unlucky *militaire*, and he stood by the side of the beauty of the room—fairly speechless.

As he stood there, looking thoroughly disconsolate, the gentleman standing next to him in the quadrille, quietly but steadily looked at him—a flush of great and visible annoyance passed over the major's white but narrow forehead; for the gentleman was Captain Bellasis, and the major saw in his face that a persecution was in store for him; goaded on by this, he determined that *coute qui coute* Grace *should* admire him: he attempted again, and in spite of her infirmity, the one of all others most embarrassing to a whispering lover! to make her, if possible, understand those honey speeches he had always found so effective hitherto. "She must be flattered—if she could but hear?"

"I have been much in town," said Major Brandon, "I have been acquainted with all the prettiest women of the day; but never did I see one so really beautiful."

"Never saw one really beautiful!" answered Grace Forrester, "you *have* astonished me—what *is* your style?"

"*You*," said the major, quite aloud for him.

"Eh?" answered she, with her deaf face.

And Major Brandon felt inclined to murder himself or her, or somebody, he was in such a rage. But still he would not give the matter up!

"The quadrille is nearly over, and I had so much to say!" piteously exclaimed he, to Miss Forrester, with such a look as made words quite superfluous.

"Say it another time!" said Grace, "I must get partners for the young ladies now," and she left him more annoyed than ever he had been in his life; and half believing that Grace had been quizzing him.

He did not long remain in doubt. The very next day he heard that Horace Leigh and she were engaged; and then he knew that Grace had been taking him off.

The poor unfortunate dandy!

THE ARTIST.

A STORY OF PITTSBURG.

CHAPTER I.

"——though I won the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me,
Was there but one, who—but of her anon."

—BYRON'S MANFRED.

It was in Pittsburg. Henry was seated in his studio. The soft breeze of a balmy summer evening stole in through the open window where he sat, and stirred the curling masses of dark brown hair that fell over the sides of his face, as he leaned his head on his open palm and looked out on the scene before and above him. A few fleecy clouds were lazily creeping over the clear, blue sky, their edges burnished with the beams of a setting sun. A chastened serenity rested on the distant valley, and the hills that bordered its farthest ways. A golden reflection of effulgence was cast by the sun, from the bosom of the two streams of water, as they slowly approximated each other, and mingled their tides in one broad current of silvery brightness. The continuous murmur of the crowds passing in the street below, was like a knell on his heart—for it called up associations he would gladly have avoided—but the pensive chime of distant bells, and the uninterrupted view of the richly-varied landscape before him, made his heart bound.

The sun was fast setting behind the Western hills, but the artist was still gazing from the window of his studio, wrapt in silent meditation. There was a quick and piercing fire in his eye—but a pallor on his cheek and brow, that told you of intense study or the wasting vigils of thought. And there, as his arm reposed on a small writing-stand by his side, and his head supported in his open hand, his eye wandering from cloud to cloud—as though their aerial home was his congenial clime—his lips now forming themselves into a smile, and anon relapsing into a settled composure—alone, and thus subdued, as if charmed by some talismanic power, you would have asked if he were not striving to read his destiny in those fair, white clouds, or penetrate the veil of the future and descry the hidden things of the unknown.

As the sun was about to disappear, his fading beams were reflected with such brilliant loveliness from a hazy cloud a short distance above the horizon, full in the face of D'Putron, that he started up in haste, seized his palette and brush; and, in a few minutes, the enchanting scene of rivers, hills, clouds, sky and setting sun were sketched on his palette with accurate delineation. It was the task of amusement—done in a moment of impulse—but it showed how proud was the conception, how noble the genius, yet obscure and unknown, that was one day to be developed, and surprise the world.

The twilight deepened. With one sweep of a

heavy pencil he marred the beauties of that bright creation—threw down his palette—took up a lamp from a shelf on the wall—lighted it, and seated himself before his easel, on the canvass of which was an unfinished painting of the "Death of Sardanapalus." He drew the light as far back as his arm could reach, gazed steadfastly on his work awhile; then placed the light immediately in front; then on either side, scrutinizing the artistical skill with the eye of an adept connoisseur, low, but audibly speaking to himself the while.

"It looks well by lamp-light, but many of its graces are hid that can be seen in the day. Ah! if I can only succeed in throwing a more striking expression of mingled sorrow and desperation into the countenance of Nineveh's King, *that* character I will expend no more time upon. Myrrha, too, must have more of devotion in her looks, as she applies the torch to the funeral pile, and looks up to the face of her lover in all the idolatrous gentleness of woman's love. But what avails it," said the artist, with a subdued, sorrowful tone of voice, shoving back his chair, and placing the lamp on his table; "what avails it! I can induce no one, in this business-wedded, and money-loving city to patronize the artist by purchasing his works. There hang my 'Demetrius,' and 'The Spy,' and 'Conqueror,' and a host of others, just where they were placed when finished, and no one to buy. True, people will visit here, and call them *pretty*, but they must be sold or their author starves."

D'Putron sat for a long time in unbroken silence, contemplating his situation. There was a sadness ever mingling with his thoughts that he could not account for. Formerly he was wont to take from history, or his own observation, the subjects of his pencil; but now, his imagination was busy in conjuring up an ideal—an embodiment of his wildest conception of the beautiful—he was dreaming of the creation of some bright, superhuman existence, whose lineaments of surpassing loveliness he should transfer from his train to the canvass. He knew not why it was, but a change had taken place in his day-dreams—they were now tinctured with indefinable longings—aspirations for something he could not divine. It was even so, yet the artist knew not that the nectar of life had been mingled with his draughts—that the germ of love was springing up in his heart to goad him on to—trial and despair!

Leaving his studio, he hastened on through several streets, shunning more fashionable resorts, till he mounted a dingy stairway leading to a "gallery of paintings," lately fitted up in the city. There was not a great number of visitors in attendance. As he entered, he beheld a very handsome young lady by

the side of a venerable, middle-aged man, intently viewing "The Eagle's Prey," one of his own productions, placed there, anonymously, for exhibition. It was the fate of an infant child, suspended in the talons of the parent eagle, over the eyrie, where her young brood were clamoring for their prey. Henry stood behind the two as they scanned the picture, and heard the high encomiums bestowed upon it. After viewing it for some time, the young lady turned round, and seeing a stranger, apparently much interested in the same painting, she inquired—

"Do you know, sir, who is the painter of that?"

Henry felt his heart beat wildly—for he had seen that radiant face before—he was confused, and essayed to speak, but his lips refused utterance; although the ardent glance of his eye showed that the question was unheeded, in admiration of the peerless charms before him. The lady, vexed at his silence, was about to turn away, when he spoke.

"I cannot say, indeed, Miss; the artist, I believe, wishes to remain unknown."

He took a seat, and followed with his eyes, in almost impertinent anxiety, the beautiful being as she passed through the spacious hall, hanging tenderly on the arm of her friend—perhaps her father—and closely viewing the various exhibitions of art. He would have given worlds to exchange places with her conductor—he had almost resolved to address her again, and declare himself the painter of the "Eagle's Prey"—but the sylph-like vision vanished from the hall. With a moody brow, an agitated mind, and warm passions warring with the heart, he sought his studio again.

CHAPTER II.

"Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again,
I have a faint, cold fear that thrills my veins,
That almost freezes up the heart of life."—SHAKESPEARE.

SEVERAL months after the incidents recorded in the last chapter, on a cool, dreary day, Henry D'Putron was busily at work before his canvass. "Sardanapalus" wanted but a few touches of the pencil to finish it, yet these were neglected. The artist was now, and had been for a long time, eager on the completion of his ideal. Each day it was gathering fresh life and beauty. He had never taxed his imagination and skill so far as now. His mind had come home to himself, and the world abroad was entirely forgotten. Ah! the artist was ignorant in his own mind, while straining it to its utmost tension, and becoming a sheer monomaniac—while plying his brush with such delicate care and assiduity, that he was drawing a life-size portrait of a miniature from off the altar of his heart. There were the same Parian brow—with the luxuriant curls of auburn hair swept gracefully over its angles—the same vermilion-tinted lips and thrilling eyes, and roseate cheek, and voluptuous bosom and sunny neck of the—lady in the "gallery of paintings."

He saw it now at a glance. A mournful smile flew to his ashy lip for a moment, and he wheeled the easel from him. Why was he torturing his mind

with vain illusions! Could the poor and fameless artist aspire to the heart and hand of the lovely, the courted, the heiress, Emily Stewart?

"Is not the cloud thickening that must soon break fearfully on my head? My last dollar is gone—duns are hourly accumulating—creditors are growing impatient—coming events cast their shadows before?"

The artist was unmanned. A few short months since he held a spirit that could have brooked any calamity—an energy that could have surmounted any obstacle; but the spell was broken.

He had, in early years, found means, despite the meagre resources of his parents, to cultivate an innate predilection and talent for painting. His success with his abilities, thus far, was more than he had looked for. But the small fortune that he began the world with, was now expended. He had no refuge to fly to; and his productions were suffered to remain unsold, and their author to wither away like a young tree riven in the storm.

By accident, dating several months back, he had become acquainted with Emily Stewart. She was charmed less with the prepossessing exterior, and the noble, frank, commanding countenance of D'Putron, than with the fascination of the burning thoughts with which he beguiled the hours of their conversation—for they met often, and enjoyed many a delicious hour in each others presence. At first sight she had seemed as the idol of all his dreams of innocence and beauty. Subsequent intimacy made her the star of his destiny. But the disparity of stations—the impassable gulf that seemed to be thrown between them, at one moment he overlooked, and the next recollected in the madness of certain disappointment.

"'Coming events cast their shadows before.' And thou, too, Emily," he audibly ejaculated, as his reflections involuntarily reverted to her image; "and thou, too, Emily, to see me degraded in the world's esteem; to see me cast on its cold-hearted current, with the guilt of penury on my name; to hear the idle laugh, and the brutal sneer at the fate of the artist."

He was interrupted by the unceremonious ingress of a young man, superbly dressed, with formidable whiskers, a massive gold chain and key dangling at his side, and flourishing a delicate, gold-headed cane. The intruder contemptuously and pompously paced the room without speaking a word, looked up at the paintings on the wall with a gaze that had no meaning in it, hummed a snatch of some air, turned round to "Sardanapalus," gave a quick "hem," and exclaimed in a voice particularly feminine—

"Pretty well done, by Jupiter! Confess—the boy has genius—extraordinary genius, indeed! Can you tell me, my boy, what that *thing* is intended for—a fireboard or hearthrug, eh?"

At any other time almost, D'Putron would have laughed outright at the prattle of this silly coxcomb; but he was morose in humor now—the unkindness of the world had lately soured much of his hitherto mild and placid temper; and to be thus intruded upon, in defiance of all courtesy; and his master-piece lowered to the standard it was when he least could bear it; he could not command himself.

"First be pleased to inform me, sir, what degree

of rascality you projected when you entered here, and how far you purpose carrying your insolence?"

"Short, by Jove!—very short indeed," said the exquisite, with a lordly toss of his head and twirl of his cane. "Be more careful, my boy. I am not used to having my inferiors strike up their feathers at such a rate as this."

"Nor I accustomed to such despicable fools as you in my presence," answered D'Putron, advancing toward him with a menacing look; "so you will please leave this place immediately, or I shall eject you in a very summary manner."

"But," cried the fop, somewhat alarmed; "a word with you, my boy, before I retire. One little request, as a Frenchman would say, and I shall be absent."

"Be speedy, then," said Henry, "for I have neither time nor patience to waste on your impertinence."

The dandy cleared his throat with sundry dry heims, placed one foot a little anterior to his body, leaned back on his cane, which he held behind him, rolled up his eyes, stroked his whiskers, and commenced.

"My boy, hem! I am a suitor for Miss Emily Stewart's hand. Hem! we are particular friends. She does not wish you to continue your little attentions any longer; they are becoming, to say the least, annoying; and I am under the necessity of saying that you *must* and *shall*! Hem!"

"Are you done?" said D'Putron.

"Hem! yes."

"Well, then, begone; what are you waiting for?" and he grasped the fashionable *petit maitre* by the collar, and was leading him to the door, when he broke violently away from the artist's hold, and sprang into the middle of the room, vociferating in excited rage—

"I must have satisfaction for this monstrous insult. What! lay hands on me! Here, my boy, here is one of my pistols; measure your distance, and we will settle this little affair of honor on the spot."

Hardly conscious of what he did, D'Putron took the weapon—but the redoubtable man of honor was obviously much frightened, for he had thought the mention, much sooner the sight and use of deadly fire-arms, would have caused "my boy" precipitately to decamp. He had mistaken his man. Henry deliberately cocked his pistol, walking to one end of the room, and taking his stand. His opponent, appalled and quaking, staggered backward to the other. Both discharged simultaneously. The dandy sprang from his feet, shouting, "murder!" at the top of his voice; and fell to the floor, crying, "murder! murder! he has killed me!" while the blood slowly trickled from a minor wound in his forearm. D'Putron calmly walked from his studio—into which, alas! he was never to return—wandering from street to street, reckless of whither or how he went till nightfall, when he sought the home of, and had an interview with Emily Stewart.

Oh! that was a sad meeting! Never till now had he told, in the fervid strains of passion, his love to that sweet girl. Never till now had he learned the depth of that affection with which she regarded him. They lingered long in that blessed dream of lovers, for which no pen is adequate, till he rose to depart.

"Yes, Emily, it must be. Oh! believe me, that in thus doing, I am planting a thorn in my heart that will fester through all coming time. But I cannot—I cannot make you the bride of one whose path is in the briar and thorn, whose meed of reward is in the contumely and scorn of the world. You would one day curse me for your dark destiny."

"No—no, Henry, I will not; only remain—do not become an exile!" The fair girl laid her hand entreatingly on his shoulder, and turned her face to his with eyes gushing in tears. "Oh! Henry, do not leave me—I cannot see you go—let us live on together, and hope for better times for you."

"Emily——" he would have said more; but his eye met hers, and he saw in her beseeching looks the index of a heart that was ready to break. He clasped her in his arms—imprinted a long, passionate kiss on her quivering lips, and burst away from her side, saying—

"Good God! this must not be! Emily, fare——" but her flexible arms were twined closely round his neck, springing from her seat ere he could finish the sentence. Gently disengaging her embrace, he led her to a seat.

"Oh! Henry, you will kill me if we part forever. Say—say—you will—you will return soon!"

"I will, Emily—I will," replied he—although, his heart whispered darkly of the improbability. Again he pressed these lips in tearful silence—a close, passionate embrace—a moment, and—*she was alone!*

He was gone—a wanderer on the wild world—from associations that phrenzied his brain—from the birth-place of sweet dreams that were never to be realized—from the spot where the eagle spread his pinions for a brighter Heaven, but fell, fluttering and broken winged, to the dust!

CHAPTER III.

"Met they no more? Once more they met,
Those kindred hearts and true?
And they, between whose severed souls,
Once in close union tied,
A gulf is set, a current rolls,
Forever to divide."

Mrs. HEMANS.

"How much!—how much is bid for this splendid, this magnificent painting of the 'Conqueror,'" cried the auctioneer, holding up the article for sale in one hand, and his hammer in the other before his customers. "How much, gentlemen—you see it—perfect of its kind—will no one bid? How much? Fifty dollars—forty—thirty—twenty—ten—five——"

"Two dollars."

"Two dollars—thank you, sir—just a-going—two dollars—two dollars—once, twice—three—times!"

"Here, gentlemen, is something you must all admire—it is beyond comparison—beautiful—sublime; how much—say anything, so it is something—debts are to be paid—they must be sold, even at a monstrous sacrifice—how much do you bid for 'Sardanapalus?'"

"Three dollars."

"Three dollars! Shame, gentlemen—three dollars for what a man works five months at—three dollars—just a-going!"

"Three and a quarter."

"Three fifty."

"That's right—three fifty—just a-going!"

"Three sixty-two."

"Three sixty-two—just a-going—going—gone!"

And thus were sold these grand creations of the artist's combined mental and physical toil. "Demetrius," the "Spy," and many others shared the same ignoble fate. At length the auctioneer took up the last, and throwing it loose before him, exclaimed—

"Now, gentlemen, here is one—par excellence—the climax of the whole—something that will take the eye and fancy of all. A finished portrait of some handsome lady—a queen for what I know—how much do you bid for this, gentlemen?"

"One fifty."

"One fifty—one fifty—shame—absolute shame—but can't be helped—one fifty—just a-going!"

"One hundred dollars!"

"Thank you, sir—one—thank you, sir," and the man with the hammer looked anxiously around to see if some sport was not on foot at his expense—but recognizing the bidder he made a slight bow, smiled complacently, and resumed—

"One hundred dollars—one hundred—thank you, sir—one hundred—just a-going—going—gone!"

The one hundred dollars were paid—the painting handed over—and Mr. Stewart stepped out with the ideal of the artist under his arm!

Years will pass away, and we note but few of their incidents. Their chronicles are most legibly traced on the tablets of men's hearts. Ten years seem a short era to look upon; but oh, what changes can be wrought in that time! D'Putron, in ten years, was almost forgotten: but not his works. One by one they had risen in the estimation of judges, till their praise was heard in every conversation. Immense sums were now offered and refused for those which were once publicly sold at the merest trifle. His ideal was still hanging in the parlor of Mr. Stewart; and many were the long, lingering looks bestowed upon it by Emily—except that latterly she could view it as a prize, but not with the intensity of overpowering retrospection. The dandy—for we know him only by that sobriquet—had relinquished all aspirations to an acquaintanceship with Emily and her *dowry*, and was squandering his life among renegades. Pittsburg had no tidings of the artist; but daily rumors reached her, of a stranger in the Eastern Continent, whose name was linked to the highest works of art and the unbounded applause of the world. Everywhere, the magic of his brush had lavished honor and wealth profusely upon him. D'Putron had become distinguished, universally, as the first of painters.

Again, after the lapse of ten years, he embarked for the United States; and visited his native city. The first place he sought, was the home of his parents. But its tenantless and dilapidated walls, met his startled vision. He was informed that, of its former inmates, the most were dead, and the rest dispersed, none knew where! An hour passed—another—and yet another! Henry was still bowed against the walls of what was once his boyhood's home. The family circle was broken—the house-god's shrine destroyed—

the hearthstone, and all its hallowed endearments—glad faces—the happy smiles—the tender converse—and the fond caress—all, all passed in painful review, as things of the past—forever buried for the future.

The following morning he called at the dwelling of Emily Stewart. He was shown into the parlor, by a servant, who requested his name to announce to the inmates. Henry, who wished to make the surprise and joy perfect, merely sent "to Miss Emily; a particular, and long-absent friend."

She soon came into the room; not as she used to come to greet him, with a smiling face, bounding step, and open hand, but with a formal, womanish gait. She did not fly to his side, as once she did, laughing and panting, in the fullness of her fettered heart; but stood just inside the door, with a fixed look that, in itself, plainly asked the name of this unknown friend. He advanced, pained to find she did not know him, and extended his hand.

"Miss Stewart does not recognize me?"

"No Sir; I confess the disadvantage of forgetfulness."

This was some disappointment—but nothing in poignancy to what followed.

"Does Miss Stewart—my own Emily, see no trace in me to recall her once loved Henry D'Putron?"

She recoiled to a sofa. A dizziness came over her vision, and she sank, insensible, into the arms so ready to receive her. As Henry used the proper restoratives to resuscitate her suspended faculties, he had leisure to contemplate her person. She had lost a little, perhaps, of her girlish lineaments, and exquisite beauty of contour of former years, but she was yet remarkably handsome. There was something about her, different from her last looks, in his eyes, and yet he could not divine what it was. At length she opened her eyes, but only to close them again, after a look of fearful anguish; with the words—

"Do I dream, or am I mocked?"

"Neither," was the smiling rejoinder, as Henry drew her to his breast; "neither, my dear Emily. You are once more in the arms of your long lost, but ever constant Henry."

She sprang to her feet, and gazed for a moment in his face with unaltered steadiness; and then said, in a tone of deep bitterness and extreme wretchedness,

"Why, did we not hear, seven years ago, that you were lost on board of the ship that was wrecked on its voyage to Liverpool?"

"Yes, yes," said he half laughing; "but that same wreck was the means of myself and two others being taken up by another ship, bound to the same port. In the sunny clime of Italy—amid the stirring scenes of oriental countries, I have plied my brush—won a title that I have courted from boyhood—gained a vast independence—and am now here to breathe to you again the love that I breathed ten years ago—and claim the original of my ideal, which I see you have in your possession."

A pallid hue overspread her face—her heart sickened—her form shook, and her tongue faltered in inarticulate accents. One moment she suffered his lavishing caresses, unknowing what she did; and the next, burst away from his arms, with a smothered

shriek; and covering her face with her hands, exclaimed, brokenly, through her tears—

"Henry, you must leave me and forever! Do not ask me why. Forget me—for Heaven's sake—forget me. You have awakened a flame in my bosom that is criminal. Your presence in Pittsburg will crush my dearest peace, and the sweetest bliss of another. Oh, my God!"

He was about to ask a solution to this ambiguity, when a little child—a rosy-cheeked, chubby boy, came bounding into their presence, saying—

"Ma, ma, my little dog has broke his riband again!"

Henry at this, struck his hand against his brow, and groaned in poignant anguish. He saw it all in a piercing thought. *She was another's!* It was a chilling, heart-blighting thought. Not an age of the world's care could so have conquered and crushed his proud spirit, as this one instance of the heart's defeat. For this he had braved the most perilous adventure—for this he had faced and conquered death—for this he had woven laurels for his brow—for this hour he had lived to be made the victim of burning memory through all coming time!

One mighty effort of his mind collected his prodigal senses; and, although it was disjointed and incoherent, he rose to his feet, and spoke a farewell, altogether foreign to his feelings, and his assumed composure.

"Yes, Emily, I must leave Pittsburg forever! Your happiness and my own must compel me to it. Forget

me in the love you should cherish for your husband; I will not—I never can forget you. In some retired hermitage, or in the crowds of men, I will strive to calm the raging fever of my mind! May God bless you and yours, Emily."

"Oh! Henry," said Mrs. Olmstead, springing toward him, while scalding tears coursed down her cheeks, "you must not go, till you exonerate me from your hate. I thought you were dead, or my—say, say, Henry that you will not curse me!"

"Never, never," said he, "will I think of you else than in the light of purity. You are dear, dearer to me than ever. Only"—he paused—"only, Emily, you will never, never see me again: Farewell, forever!" They were parted till Eternity's meeting!

That day and the next, Henry was threading the streets of the city, lost to every thing but the keen reflections of his mind; which from that time was attuned to a strange kind of melancholy, that clung to him through life. He still persecuted his favorite pursuit—but the glory that crowned each gorgeous creation of his mind and brush, fell on a heart that heeded it not. He was wrapt up in a stern coldness, that no fire could dispel. Ambition was forgotten—and the greatest happiness of his after life, seemed to be, when the last shades were given to some splendid portrait, to write, with his pencil, under it the name of *Emily!*

N. B. W.

THE BACHELOR CAUGHT; OR, THE NEW DIARY OF AN ENJOYER.

BY MRS. JOSEPH C. NEAL.

"PRAY, my dear fellow, of what has that poor manuscript volume been guilty, that you so mercilessly doom it to the flames?"

The gentleman thus questioned looked up, and smiled at the same time, gathering up the loose leaves, scratched and blotted as they were, that he had just torn from a neatly bound volume.

"A journal by all that's sentimental," continued his friend, glancing at a page that was still upon the carpet.

"Yes, Hal, my journal, for the last year, or rather an attempt at journalizing, for I confess the dates are few and far between. Shall I read it to you before the conflagration? I think parts of it would amuse you."

"Just the thing for this uncomfortable November evening; and as we are forbidden to set foot in Spruce street, I'll take the liberty of smoking in your presence, and of stretching myself on this sofa as a preliminary."

Suiting the action to the word, Henry Norton, Esq., was soon completely enveloped in a cloud of smoke, and his companion, a slight, and somewhat haughty looking man, read aloud the loose leaves that had been destined to eternal oblivion.

"I, Morton Howard, am twenty-four to-day," so ran the announcement, under date of October twelfth, 1847. "Strange to say, I wish I was back again with college fare and college companions. We had some fun at least with all the disagreeables; and anticipation of the time when we should no longer be subjected to professors and tutors, was happiness enough. Now I have nothing to hope, nothing to anticipate, and worse than all nothing to do. I am sick of myself, tired of the world, and all its so called pleasures. I almost envy these Market street fellows, they look so bustling and happy over their bales and boxes. Its a great misfortune to be born a rich man's son, and if any one don't think so, let them try my life awhile. My sisters are both married, and need neither my assistance nor my sympathy; I dine with them once a week; I pass them as they roll by in their splendid carriages. Perhaps if they were not so engrossed in their fine horses, and with their fine company, they could find a little time and affection to bestow on me. My companions are not my friends; I don't believe one of them, with the exception of Harry Norton, would care a farthing for me were I once stripped of the wealth that now gives me a kind of consequence in their eyes."

The listener made a profound bow of acknowledgment.

"My life is unvaried by a single out of the way incident. I rise, and breakfast amid the din of a gentleman's ordinary. Ride Psyche ten miles or

so; stroll up Chesnut street, and down again to dinner Lounge about the reading-room until tea, then lounge with equal want of *gusto* into the theatre, opera, or some jam of a party, where you say the same things to the same stupid, husband-hunting young ladies. None of them need attempt to 'snare' me. Bad as this sort of life is, I've no fancy for being married for an establishment, and that's all girls think of now-a-days. I don't believe there's such a thing as love in this degenerate age. I wonder if my mother really loved my father. I don't remember that they ever quarreled, but then they were too well bred for that sort of thing.

"October 13th—I rode Psyche down to Point Breeze this morning. Jove! how she did canter. Came back all in a foam, and I was obliged to stop in the stable and see that she was properly cared for. I do love that little creature with her slender, graceful limbs and arching neck. One must be attached to something, I suppose, and I lavish my affection on Psyche.

"As I came into Chesnut street, I met Harry, who was sailing elegantly along in a new suit of superfine broadcloth. (Mem. to change my hat for a Beebe & Coster.)

"Where now?" said I.

"Just strolling up to see the pretty girls as they come from Dirigo's music-room," was his answer, 'its two nearly, and his largest class must be just out. The little dears have such a fine color after the exertion of practising roudales and cadenzas. Come in,' so I joined him, for I'd nothing on earth to do between that and dinner. He tells me Ned Price lost a cool fifteen hundred dollars at the Long Island Races; I burnt my fingers and lightened my purse there, last year. Ned should have known better. I don't mind the money, but I can't submit to the mortification.

"We came up to Twelfth street just as a knot of young girls left the door of the academy. I don't believe there was one of them over eighteen, and most of them are not 'out' yet. They were all new faces to me, but Harry bowed right and left, they smiling and blushing as if they were all in love with him at once. There was one I shall never forget—such eyes—such curls—and a dainty little hand, gloved at Levy's, I'll be bound. I was just going to ask Harry who she was, when I saw the fellow marching off with one of the prettiest in the group, howing coolly to me as he did so. Before I had recovered from my astonishment she was out of sight.

"October 20th.—I don't know how it happened, but last Wednesday morning I found myself near Twelfth street, just at ten o'clock. Who can that young lady be? It was very damp, and as she trod the crossing daintily discovered a neat gaiter, and a

still neater foot. I always did admire to see ladies well gloved and shod. That's the best point about my sisters.

"October 21st.—The Musical Fund Concert last evening was very dull. I was just about beating a retreat, when bless thee, fortune, I discovered the incognita, a few seats before me. Most luckily Ned Price was with me, and he knew her. She is Miss Gray, of Arch street, he tells me; the daughter of a rich tobacconist, not in our set at all. I wish—but pshaw, it makes no difference to me.

"October 25th.—Miss Gray certainly looks like a lady of high refinement. What difference does it make about my visiting her whether Mrs. B—— patronizes her or not. I've a great mind to get Ned to introduce me. I wonder if *she* wonders at our frequent *accidental* meetings? I'm sure she blushed to-day, and I could scarcely refrain from lifting my hat.

"October 29th.—It so happened that I met Ned Price last evening at the corner of Arch and Broad. Where should he be bound but to the very Miss Gray's? Before I knew it he had hurried me up the broad marble steps—the servant ushered us in, and in a moment Miss Gray entered the brilliantly lighted room to receive us.

"Ned rose as she came forward, and presented me as the friend he had so often spoken of—I had not looked up till then, for somehow I felt a little nervous. Imagine my astonishment when I saw a lady nearly as tall as myself—with long, disheveled ringlets, and such a color. She was an entire stranger. I know I must have acted like a madman, but think of the shock to my poor nerves. Ned looked on in amazement; he evidently thinks me in love with *his* Miss Gray, but she's not the little divinity I worship. Pshaw, that's a foolish sentence, but somehow I scratched it down without thinking.

"At first I was puzzled to think how the mistake had arisen, but after a while I remembered that this very lady was sitting next to incognita, the night of the concert. I remember her distinctly, for she wore a horrid crimson velvet head-dress that annoyed me all the while. Ned had 'mistaken the person,' and most heartily did he laugh at my disappointment when we were once more in the street.

"October 30th.—I'm growing tired of my Spanish. I think I shall take a few lessons of Dirigo. I once had a tolerable tenor voice. Psyche's a great deal of trouble, I wish horses would exercise themselves; by the way I should like to see incognita on horseback. I wonder if she rides well. Any woman who has any sort of a figure always looks best upon horseback.

"November 5th.—I wonder what can have occurred. The fair unknown has not been at her music lessons for the last three days.

"November 9th.—I resolved I would not attend Mrs. De B——'s party last evening, but just time for me to dress I passed before my mirror, and finding that I was looking my very best, I concluded I would drop in for a few minutes. I had scarcely made my bow to *madame*, when who should I see entering next to me but Dirigo's fair pupil. She was leaning on the arm of a tall, fine looking fellow. Her

brother, I suppose. How like a sylph she moved across the floor, how gracefully she returned the greetings of her acquaintances. She must have noticed how I watched her, at least I am afraid she did, for as her eyes met mine for a single instant, I saw her blush again. She turned away her head very quickly, and passed on to another room. There was not a soul near me who knew her, though I asked several. She must be a new face.

"About half an hour after I heard some one say, 'she has consented to sing,' and I—never thinking that she could have reference to any one beside the lady who had been haunting my steps for so long—hastened toward the music-room. Nor was I mistaken; she was just playing the prelude to 'Il Segreto,' my favorite over anything in the whole opera of 'Lucrecia Borgia.' There was a perfect hush through the crowded room as her brilliant and yet liquid voice gave the animated strain. To my taste she sang it as well as Pico ever did.

"There was no one standing near me from whom I could ask her name, and as I heard several inquire, I presume she is a stranger in the city.

"November 13th.—I have a clue now, I am sure I have. On passing down Walnut street this morning, I saw incognita run up the steps of one of the largest houses between Eleventh and Twelfth. Morgan was the name upon the door-plate. I do not recollect it all. She passed the servant at the door, and entered as if she was quite at home. The Lockwoods live within a few doors, I shall call there this evening, and at last be tormented with vague curiosity no more. I shall never think of her, after I once know her name, but its so provoking to be bothered in this way.

"November 14th.—Off the track again. I called at the Lockwoods, was eagerly received by both mother and daughter, (I ought to have paid a call there months ago.) After a few preliminaries I managed to introduce the subject of neighbors generally, and suddenly became interested in the discussion of theirs. 'There are the Whites,' said they, 'grand enough people, but then one does not care to associate with them. The Jacksons are as haughty as people can well be, and of course *we* don't make first advances to any one. The Morgans (I am sure they must have seen that my face flushed. I wish I could get over that woman's habit of blushing)—the Morgans,' continued Mrs. Lockwood, 'see no society at all, they are quite old, and have not a child in the world.'

"Of course I could make no further inquiry, and soon after took leave. I think Anna Lockwood has a fancy this way: that's the reason I don't call oftener. She's a pretty girl, its true, and waltzes, polkas, etc., delightfully. But I whistled—

"'Liberty for me,' as I came down the steps, and I am resolved that I never will be entrapped into matrimony.

"November 15th.—Henry Norton knows nothing of the fair unknown: he promised to ask one of those pretty girls he walked home with the other day, but last evening he took a sudden fancy to pass a week in Baltimore, and I am as much in the dark as ever. She does not go to Dirigo's now, or I fear I should be tempted to do so ungentlemanly a thing as to escort

home some day. Walking a square or so behind, of course, I met her on Chesnut street yesterday. She had been walking rapidly, and had a most brilliant color. Who can she be, and what difference does it make to me who she is? I don't want a wife, that's certain. I have lady friends enough now in all conscience. By the way, Anna Lockwood fairly invited me to a promenade yesterday. I do wish ladies would not infringe upon our prerogative of courtship; I might have fancied that girl once, but I like to have all the trouble on my side. Her mother, too, is constantly manœuvring to get us together. I have an invitation there for to-morrow night.

"November 16th.—What provokingly short memories some people have. I met Mrs. De B—— last night at Lockwood's. She had not the slightest recollection of any one who sang 'Il Segreto' at her house last week; believed she was not in the music-room at the time, or something of that sort. What a fool—yes, a downright fool I am to think so much of this matter. But then it helps me to pass away the time, for

‘Reading with me is not in vogue,
I can't be plagued to think.’

as the song goes—well, hurrah for a ride on Pysche. I call on Miss M——, in School-House Lane. I wonder if they intend staying at their country-seat all winter? What a pity she's going to be married. She's the only woman I know that's worth talking to.

"November 20th.—In luck to-day for once in the world. I went out this morning discontented with myself, and my tailor in particular. A new vest, sent home last night, fitted horribly; and, moreover, I couldn't tie a bow to suit me in my cravat. I found myself going up Spruce street before I knew it, and just above Fourth my ill-humor was increased by having a servant dash a whole bucket of water over my nicely polished boots. As I looked up to give him a blessing, who should I see at the window of that very house but the lady—not of my love, but of my curiosity. She was holding one of the sweetest children I ever saw, and the little creature had pulled down those long braids I admired so much, giving her the most picturesque air imaginable. She did not see my mishap fortunately, and I hurried on to get a look at the door-plate. The name was there, but the steps were so high, and it was engraved so fine that I could not read it. I found I had left my glass at home. I wish I had a respectable pair of eyes—I am always running over some acquaintance in the street, or getting to the opera without a glass, and being annoyed all the evening by not being able to distinguish a face. But fortune was about to turn the tables in my favor. Not a square off I met young Dr. Harrington, who mentioned that he was going to make a call at that very house. They are New York people, just come to our city. Fine family, he says, and my unknown is named Emily Douglass. 'Un-engaged too,' added Harrington, in the excess of his communicativeness, and added, 'shall I introduce you? I'll take the privilege of an old friend. I have known her ever since I can recollect.' I thanked him, but declined, though I was dying to go.

"To-night at Dandurand's, who should come in but Harrington. 'I happened to mention having met you this morning,' was his salutation, 'and Miss Emily begged me to bring you there some day. They have few acquaintances in the city: are very select, and now you won't refuse to go. I only wonder at their requesting an introduction.'

"Harrington is a good-natured fellow, but he talks too much, decidedly too much. At first I thought he had been repeating my cross questions, but he assured me he had not. It is odd that Miss Douglass should wish my acquaintance. I'll wager anything she suspects I am her unknown friend, for she must have noticed my embarrassment at our last meeting. Well, come what will, I'll accept Harrington's offer.

"November 27th.—If there ever was a man so egregiously humbugged before! Miss Douglass is—but I'll record my last night's adventures for my future instruction and amusement.

"I was as particular as a woman about my toilette. Angry at myself all the while for doing so, and never looked worse than when Harrington came in. I don't remember anything about our walk, only that Harrington asked me how much I would take for Pysche! I stared at the fellow to see if he was in earnest. Part with Pysche!—I'd as soon think of selling a sofa, if I had one.

"Incognita was reading quite alone in the front parlor as we were announced. She blushed as she saw me; I grew a still deeper crimson, and Harrington presented me to Mrs. Scott! Yes, Mrs! I thought I must have been mistaken, and stumbled through with the necessary formalities. After a moment she recovered her self-possession, and entered into a conversation with Harrington, in the course of which she remarked that Captain Scott would leave Mexico the ensuing week, and, after a two years separation, she should once more meet her husband. There was no mistake in the matter now at least. I felt as if stupefied suddenly; I sat without uttering a syllable. To think that I had wasted all my—curiosity, upon a wife, and a devoted one too, as I plainly saw. A feeling almost like faintness crept over me, but I rallied as Harrington suddenly called on me to join the conversation.

"Just then a delicate, child-like creature came hastily into the room, 'sister,' said she, 'little Willie is——' and then she saw me, and stopped suddenly in the centre of the room. A brilliant light fairly shrouded her, for she stood directly under the chandelier, and, as she hesitated an instant, you might almost have thought her *en tableau* for the repentant Peri. There was a floating, winning grace about her that was irresistible.

"'Well, what of my little Willie?' said Mrs. Scott.

"So it was her own child she had held the morning I saw her at the window; I thought it was some nephew or niece. I never should have dreamed she was a wife, certainly not a mother. The young girl was Miss Emily Douglass, and, to crown my mortification, she naively remarked on our introduction, 'you are not the gentleman I thought you were,' an equivocal compliment Harrington afterward explained. I had been pointed out to her at the opera,

some time before, when Harry had been with me, and she also had mistaken the person. Confound that fellow, Harry!—how that handsome face of his makes its way in the world."

Once more the gentleman upon the sofa bowed profoundly, and lighted a fresh cigar as his friend continued—

"Christmas Day, 1847.—I paid a call in Spruce street this morning; the sofa-table was loaded with most elegant gifts. Miss Douglass must have a great many friends. I wonder who that tall fellow was that she greeted so cordially just as I left? She's much too young to be in general society.

"January 5th, 1848.—Mrs. Scott and myself have grown to be excellent friends. She laughed merrily last night at a recital I gave of my curiosity on her account. I never intended any one should know that—but she has such a queer way of making one tell their very thoughts. I wish she was my sister. I believe I could love her dearly—to tell the truth, I begin to think I had better waste my affection upon a lady than a horse, after all. Chesnut street belles forgive the comparison!

"January 15th.—Miss Douglass has a delicious voice. I was quite surprised last evening at its power and compass. It is far beyond Mrs. Scott's. Her husband—Mrs. Scott's I mean—will be home in a few days. Why couldn't he have been shot, I wonder, as well as some of his brother officers? Heaven forgive the thought, but what a darling little widow she would be. I should be almost tempted to turn Benedict for her sake.

"January 21st.—It's too cold and stormy to ride now-a-days. One can't read all the time; I'm sick of billiards—besides, I never win a game. I wonder if I should be happier if I had a nice little wife to talk to, one that could sing away this evil spirit of *ennui*. But then housekeeping must be so tiresome: and the idea of knowing anything about marketing—most husband's have to, I believe. I shall spend the evening in Spruce street—but then I always come home so discontented.

"January 22nd.—Captain Scott came yesterday. I don't wonder that his wife is fond of him. A fine, soldiery man, frank, affable and intelligent. Mrs. Scott looked so provokingly happy—and her husband so provokingly comfortable as he sat beside her on a lounge, with little Willie between them.

"I suppose I shall be an intruder now," said I, half jestingly, half sadly.

"Oh, no," said she, "but I shall expect Emily to entertain you now. I shall put you in her care for the future."

"I don't know how it happened, but Emily blushed, I am sure, and to tell the truth, I felt a little nervous, as I crossed the room and sat down beside her. 'Will you take so tremendous a charge?' said I, by way of saying something.

"Her little hands pulled the tassel of the sofa-cushion most unmercifully, and she glanced timidly up without saying a word. Oh, those eyes—so gentle, so confiding! A strange, electric thrill darted through my heart. I looked at Mrs. Scott—but she was deeply engaged in conversation with her husband.

"Do not refuse me," I could not refrain from whispering. And again those eyes met my own.

"Pshaw! how ridiculous to record a mere accident. But to tell the truth, I dreamed the whole scene over again last night.

"February 5th.—What a charming family the Douglasses are—from the gentlemanly papa to little Willie Scott. I'm very fond of that child—how proud his father must be. I wonder if people really are happier married. Last evening I took the little fellow in my arms, and he began to prattle in his artless way.

"That's my father," said he, pointing to Captain Scott, who was reading at the window. 'He is my mamma's husband. Ain't you Aunt Emily's husband?'

"No, my dear," said I, involuntarily, 'but I wish I was.' Just then I saw that Miss Douglass was in the back parlor—I had spoken very low, so I was sure she could not have heard me, but I felt as if I had said a very foolish thing.

"February 6th.—Am I the most happy or the most miserable of men? Am I awake or asleep? What creatures children are, and how unpremeditated is a proposal, after all. I had promised to take Emily the new poem of the Princess this morning, and for a great wonder I saw her alone. She was not looking well, and I longed to draw the weary little head to rest close to my throbbing, wildly beating heart.

"There was an awkward pause in the conversation. 'Where is my little favorite?' said I, at length. 'I will send for him,' answered Emily; and before I could remonstrate, that precious *tete-a-tete* was broken by the little tell-tale.

"Ah," said he, springing with all the confidence of an established pet into my arms; 'ah, I told Aunt Emily you wanted to be her husband. Why won't you be?'

"Imagine the poor girl's blushes and my confusion. I don't remember what drew little Willie away, but not a moment after we were alone, and I had whispered—

"Willie has but told the truth. I do wish, sincerely—earnestly, that you would be mine—*my own*,' I said, clasping the delicate hand that trembled so near my own.

"Again those mute but clearly eloquent eyes were raised to mine, and the impulse of the moment was not resisted. I clasped her to my heart, and her bright, young head rested for a moment on my bosom. Oh, that long, delicious hour—I told her how unconsciously she had stolen my love and melted my selfishness. That I had been and would be a nobler and better man for her dear sake, and at last I heard from her own lips the trembling confession that my love had not been wasted.

"How heartily Mrs. Scott congratulated us, as I led my Emily to her on her return, and told her I had not been disdained.

"I will answer for papa's sanction," said she; and Captain Scott nearly crushed my hand in the energy of his grasp.

"February 10th.—I met Harry to-day, and made him my confidant. How he stared—

"What, you, Morton Howard?" exclaimed he, "you engaged—you turning Benedict? It's the best joke of the season—positively the best"—but he did not jest after I had introduced him to Emily.

"You're a lucky fellow," was his sole comment as we left Spruce street, "and I'll dine with you once a week, when it's all over."

"So like him, and he shall be my groomsman. What an unreasonable man Mr. Douglass is, to insist on deferring the wedding six months at least. Emily was seventeen only last week, and he thinks her too young to marry just at present.

"There is a long hiatus," observed Howard, as he took up the last leaf of the volume. "Fill it up with Saratoga, Newport, and Niagara. I never was so tired of a summer tour, for I didn't have a tete-a-tete once a week. Bless her dear little heart, Emily was as anxious to get home as I was."

"Don't laugh," he added, glancing down the page with a smile. "It's very husband-like."

"September 27th.—I have been out all the morning looking for a house, and at last found the very one for us. It is not more than four squares from Emily's home. I shall have one of my own, soon, newly built, and neatly finished—the parlors are large, and the back buildings Emily pronounces delightful. I suppose they've a great deal to do with the comfort of a family, but I could not quite understand her raptures. There's a nice, little room back of the dining-room, I am to have for my own peculiar 'den,' Miss

Emily says—and when this bother of upholsterers, etc. etc., is over, I shall begin to feel quite like a married man. After all, there is something delightful in this bustle of preparation. I haven't played a game of billiards these three months. By the way, Pysche never shows to such good advantage as when my fearless little puss is riding her. Every day I find something to congratulate myself for. I have now an object in life; some one to care for me, and some one beside myself to please. My sisters have taken a great fancy to my wife—that will very soon be—and cross Harry continues to call me a lucky dog. No more lonely hotel life—no more *ennui*, when that house is once inhabited by the dearest of human creatures."

The journal suddenly ceased, and after a few critical comments, Harry Norton looked at his watch, and pleaded an engagement.

There was a kindly commiseration of look and tone, as he grasped his friend's hand, and said, "tomorrow this time it will be all over with you, Howard. Poor fellow—poor fellow."

Howard laughed guiltily as he returned the cordial pressure, and declared it was all envy instead of pity, and reminded his friend of the weekly visit he had promised, when they were once comfortably settled.

"I'll wait till the honey-moon is over," was the rejoinder; "and whatever else you do, beg Mrs. Howard to be careful in the choice of her *cook*."

THE BENDING BRANCH.

A STORY OF AN ENCHANTED ISLAND.

BY GEORGE SWANQUILL.

It is now many years since the occurrence I am about to narrate took place, and strongly has it impressed itself upon my memory. It was during the month of March, on a cold, windy, disagreeable night, that I sat over a brilliant fire, in company with a friend, cracking jokes, and singing songs, when the old clock that had ticked in the corner for many a year, commenced striking. I counted the hours one—two—three, till it struck eleven. "What!" was my exclamation: "so late! well, really, hadn't the least idea of it," and taking a candle, I hurried up the stairs to my sleeping-room.

Before long I was snugly ensconced under the bed-clothes, gazing through the window at the pale moon, and noticing the swiftly driven, stormy looking clouds. I felt, moreover, in very good spirits, and lying there ran over in my mind the principal occurrences of the evening, and when I recollected any joke that had been uttered, burst out into a peal of laughter which sounded strangely in that large, dismal, retired room, lit only by my flickering candle.

I again heard the clock strike. It was the mystic hour of midnight! As the first stroke died away upon my ear, the door below was loudly shut. "What could have caused this?" thought I, "ah! pshaw! it was but the work of the wind," and thinking in that wise, and also that it was high time I was asleep, I turned upon my pillow. Now comes the strange part of my narrative. As I was thus trying to sleep, "tramp! tramp!" sounded on the wooden staircase. "Tramp! tramp!" continued the voice. "Hillo!" exclaimed I, inwardly, "what's that?" "Tramp! tramp!" and the stepping was so solemn, so measured in its time, and so unearthly withal, that a slight sensation—very slight let me state, reader, I always am a courageous man—that a slight sensation of fear entered my heart. "What is it? Who *can* it be?" "Tramp! tramp!" was my only answer. The steps sounded close to my door, I heard the knob turn, and the door slowly opened, when—I dove under the bed-clothes.

I heard the door shut.

"Ah! it is gone," I said, relieved, for although I am a very courageous man, yet I had not seen what opened it. Do not smile, most fault-finding reader, for you would have done the same if you were in my situation, that is if—you had seen the object that met my astonished eyes.

There stood in front of my bed a man apparently about seven or eight feet in height, as lean as a lamp-post, dressed entirely in red: red coat, red pants, shoes, face, hair, cap, and feature all of a vivid red; never did I see such a sight before, and never wish to again—but his eyes! I had nearly forgotten to mention them. They both looked in different ways,

one out of the right corner of the lid, the other out of the left, and *such* eyes! they appeared of a still more brilliant scarlet than his coat.

He stood upright, and raising his arm beckoned to me.

By an irresistible impulse I arose, dressed and followed him.

He went down step by step with the same dull, heavy, measured tramp that had before startled me, it was surprising that none of the family heard us, till he came to the front door, which, like the one upstairs, opened of itself, and when we were out slammed to with tremendous force and noise. "Am I awake, asleep, dead, in this world, or in the next?" I asked myself, as I rubbed my eyes and gazed upon him; after a short walk we came to the river, where was a small boat painted also of a bright red. He motioned me to get in. I set myself down in the middle, while he, getting in the stern, took hold of the helm, and the boat glided onward without either sail or oars.

Soon we emerged from the peaceful river into the turbulent ocean, and as we dashed onward the land sank beneath the distant horizon, and on all sides nothing was to be distinguished but sky and water. At one time we were tossed high upon the angry waves, at another sunk between them, and it seemed as if the billows would overwhelm us with their fury, and dash in pieces our fragile bark. Never shall I forget, as long as my life endures, the horrors of that night. As we continued advancing, I felt the air grow more warm and balmy, and dark leaden colored clouds swiftly arose. Out of them dashed vivid streaks of lightning, dazzling the eye, and terrific thunder accompanied them. Mine was a horrible situation, alone, without friends or companions, save this mysterious being.

The storm passed off and all was tranquil. A light streak ran along the edge of the sky meeting the water, and, as I gazed upon it, faint rays shot up toward the zenith, and soon the monarch of the day arose in all his splendor, illuminating the vast expanse of water around us, and cresting their waves with flashing silver. Before us I distinguished a thin line of blue which I supposed was land, but what land?—where were we? In what part of the world? For what purpose was I thus undertaking this perilous voyage? All these were questions I was unable to answer. We neared the land which had the resemblance of an island, and I saw nothing but craggy rocks of brownish hue, with here and there a few stunted trees, looking like pines and firs growing where sufficient earth could be found to nourish them. Dreadfulness was upon all. Our boat lessened in speed, and gliding upon the stormy beach, left us high and

dry. I sprang out. My conductor following, led the way to a crevice in the dark rock which he entered, motioning me to come after. I entered a sort of grotto or chamber, at one end of which hung a curtain of black velvet.

"Where am I?" I inquired of my silent guide.

But he answered not.

Solemn music now rose faintly on my ear, and the deep swelling notes as if those of an organ filled the grotto. It grew louder and increased in sweetness. I was entranced with the melody and forgot the place, the occasion, and the company in which I was. I thought of nothing, and heard nothing but those sweet strains, and while I listened a ray of dim light was discerned behind the curtain of black velvet. Slowly it raised itself—what a sight I beheld!

It was a picture representing the first place of my life, when I was in childhood; and it kept continually changing, showing all the different events and actions of my past life.

"I could," said the red being, "show you what is yet to come."

"What is yet to happen me?"

"Yes."

"Why do you not?"

"Because my time is come: I had not expected it was so late and must away; shortly, however, I will return. Hark! I am called."

"Who calls you?"

"Listen!"

"I hear nothing."

"Hark! the knell!"

And as he spoke, I heard a faint stroke as if of a bell, far, far-off, yet getting louder and still louder. He folded his arms, and, standing straight up, the ground opened, and he sank from my sight. Meanwhile the echoes of the stroke I heard vibrated through the grotto and died away—a dizziness overspread my eyes. I fell senseless to the ground, and when I again recovered them, found I was laying on the sand of the sea-shore, the mighty waves dashing their briny spray over me, the rising sun shedding his glorious light above me, and alone, for the boat had disappeared.

I arose, and tried to discern the opening through which we entered the chamber in which was the picture, but could not. I examined the rocks attentively, but could find no aperture of any kind. "Surely," cried I, "I am laboring under a dream, but I am awake—where am I?—what is the land on which I stand?" I was enclosed on one side by the flashing ocean, while perpendicular rocks and jutting crags formed the two other, making a sort of semicircle. At last, seeing that either I must stay where I was, and most likely starve to death, or clamber up the sides of the rock, I came to the resolution of doing the latter, and after some time spent, with considerable labor, accomplished my undertaking, but with hands sadly blistered, and a tired, exhausted frame I raised my eyes. Never can the recollection of the enchanting prospect pass from my memory. I realized my ideas of fairy land.

I stood upon a sort of promontory, the surface of which was composed of stony soil, covered with furze,

here and there a green plant, and a wide, parched hill, gradually sloping down to the level of the island, and carpeted with green grass, profusely sprinkled with crimson flowers of great beauty. Being upon the highest ground, I noticed the blue waters entirely surrounding the island, which appeared to be about nine miles in circumference. Below, lay spread out in all its beauty a magnificent plain abounding in graceful trees, and one or two small sheets of water, which could hardly be called lakes. Clusters of trees surrounded them, while beyond lay the hills wrapped in magical tints bounding the picture, the whole under a sky of the purest azure dashed here and there with feathery clouds, and a glorious sun pouring down his golden rays. But when I had descended and walked along the plain, I saw beauties that before I had no conception of, superb flowers impregnating the air with their delicious fragrance, groves and rustic bowers, together with sparkling brooks and cool grottoes, all appeared as if it was some fairy home, and I expected at every moment to see light and airy forms floating through the perfumed air, or behold them dancing on the velvet-like grass.

The whole day was spent in wandering about this enchanted island, at times resting my tired limbs beside the purling brook, or ascending some height to view the delightful scenery which was altering at every different point of view; appeasing my hunger with the delicious fruit which hung from the trees in tempting display; and my thirst by the cool fluid of the numerous waterfalls, whose silver voices were distinguished issuing from the lovely groves, uniting in harmony with the songs of the birds, and silver gushing, sparkling water fell on rocks rendered green by plants and moss. Everything was bathed in loveliness.

The day declined. The sun set behind the distant wave in inexpressible splendor, and the different magnificent hues in which the clouds were thrown defies description. As night was shrouding the earth with her sable garment, I sought for a place of rest, and resolved to take my habitation, in safety, in a high tree, up which I clambered.

The night passed by, but before the sun had risen I was startled by hearing beneath me a hissing noise, and, on casting my eyes in that direction, what was my horror on perceiving an immense snake glaring at me with his brilliant, yet black eyes! I held tightly to the branch, but my senses nearly forsook me when he commenced winding his body around the trunk of the tree, and slowly rising. I saw his jaws loaded with the deadly venom open, and beheld his forked tongue dash in and out with the rapidity of lightning! I shudder even now at the recollection.

Still higher did he raise his swollen head, till it rested on the branch I sat; his neck curved gracefully, and he neared me with his eyes still glaring at mine. Summoning up what was remaining of my courage, I retreated to the end of the branch which bent with my weight, and caused the reptile for an instant to stop. I now let myself down, still supported by my hands, and commenced raising and depressing the branch for the purpose of stopping his progress, and to get an opportunity of escaping. I

was all ready for the jump, when, on looking down for the purpose of seeing the distance, my eyes encountered those of another hideous serpent, apparently the mate of the other.

There he sat calmly awaiting my descent. The branch bent quite low—my courage had entirely gone. I gave a shriek, and, loosing my grasp, fell to the

ground, curling beneath me the fragile plants, when the serpent bounded toward me, and—I *awoke!* Yes! I awoke to find myself lying on the floor of my apartment; and while I sat wondering at my new position, I heard the hour strike. Looking at my watch I found that it was twelve o'clock. My dream had lasted just one minute, and it was now the FIRST OF APRIL.

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THE GENTLE WARNING.

BY JANE WEAVER.

In a neat apartment of an old colonial mansion, still standing in one of the neighboring states, might have been seen, nearly a century ago, two persons. Both were females, and both were lovely. One who seemed the senior, sat in a carved chair, before a table of curious workmanship, on which lay an open letter, to which she pointed with one hand, while with the other she held that of her companion, on whom she gazed earnestly, as if in expostulation.

This companion was standing. She did not return the gaze of the other, but looked down half pettishly. Though younger than the speaker, she was scarcely more beautiful. The one indeed was the slender bud, the other the matured flower. They were orphans and sisters.

"Rosa, dear," said the elder, "do not be angry, for I spoke for your good. This letter, which, by a mistake in the superscription, I received and read, is, I find, intended for you; and it comes from one as hollow-hearted as he is insidious. Lord Beauchampe is a man of the world and a profligate, and, believe me, he means to trifle with you."

Her listener had heard her in motionless silence, but now she angrily jerked away her head.

"Nay! dear sister," said the elder, "you must hear me. By the memory of our sainted mother, who bade me watch over you, I charge you to listen to my warning. We are but provincials, and, though wealthy, without rank. Lord Beauchampe is the son of a duke, and can choose from the richest and highest of England. Think you, then, that he would wed an unknown provincial? You would tell me that true love overlooks distinctions—so it would in a generous heart—but this man is notoriously selfish, vain, and profligate—he only seeks you to betray—"

"You do him injustice. He is all that is noble and good," cried Rosa, with eyes sparkling with indignation. "But you are all my enemies here! you are angry that he does not love you."

And the beautiful girl had flaunted from the room; while her sister, with a sigh, felt that expostulation, at least at present, would do no good.

Never was there a greater difference between two characters, than between Bertha and Rosa Despencer. The former was thirteen when her mother died, while

the latter was but seven. Almost the last words of the dying woman had been to leave her youngest child to the charge of the eldest, in whom she already perceived a discretion and energy above her years. This task thus assigned to Bertha, had been a difficult one, for Rosa was as wilful and thoughtless as one sister had been obedient and discreet. In the endeavor to correct the faults of Rosa, Bertha had disciplined her own character, so that, at twenty-two, she was as near perfection, as any human creature can be. She had long been affianced to a young clergyman in the vicinity, but, mindful of her promise to her mother, she steadfastly refused to marry, while her sister remained so young.

A few months before our tale begins, a new governor had come out from England, and, in his train, appeared Lord Beauchampe. He was handsome and accomplished, but it required no superficial observer to see that he was without principle; and indeed it was currently rumored that he had been sent to America, into a kind of exile, in consequence of his extravagant vices at home. Rosa had been introduced to him at a ball at the government house. Inexperienced and vain, she believed all his flatteries, and when he sought her intimacy, her heart beat with visions of future greatness as his bride. Bertha, who read his character, endeavored to discountenance his visits. As she was mistress of the establishment, Lord Beauchampe, with all his polite impudence, dared not force himself on her acquaintance. Hence he was compelled to carry on his designs against Rosa in secret. The thoughtless, wilful girl first met him accidentally abroad, and then by appointment. Affairs had already progressed to a dangerous crisis, when a letter misdirected, fell into Bertha's hands, and revealed the peril of her sister.

Alone in her room, Rosa repented of her taunt to her sister. She knew that Bertha adored her betrothed, and that even the offer of a monarch's hand could not tempt her sister to desert Charles Vaughan. But Rosa believed that her sister was prejudiced against Lord Beauchampe; and though, at first, she thought of seeking Bertha, and asking her pardon for what she had said, the recollection of what she thought injustice to her lover, deterred her.

"No," she soliloquized, "she has slandered Lord Beauchampe and she never *will* alter her opinion, I see. Why then should I wait for her consent? No! I will write at once to Harry. He loves me, I am sure. When I appear as his wife at the governor's court, then will Bertha do him justice."

It is impossible to describe the consternation which fell upon that hitherto innocent household, when, on the following morning, it was found that Rosa had not slept in her bed the night before. The sisters had parted at their usual hour of retiring. Bertha remembered that there had been more show of affection on Rosa's part than usual, but she had attributed it to her sister's regret for the cruel taunts uttered in the morning. Alas! she now understood it better. A note was left on Rosa's dressing-table, saying that, before morning, she should be far away, and that pursuit would be useless.

Bertha did not sit down to unavailing tears. These she reserved for the time, if it should come, when action would be too late. While the servants were wringing their hands, and the old nurse was bewailing the loss of her darling, she despatched a footman for her lover, and sat down to consider what was best to be done. In less than fifteen minutes Charles Vaughan entered the room.

Handsome, accomplished, of finished manners, of unbounded abilities, truly pious, and as amiable as he was wise, the Rev. Mr. Vaughan was adored by his congregation, and looked up to by all. In every way he was worthy even of Bertha. She met him with a frank pressure of the hand, and then proceeded to the painful subject for which she had summoned him.

"Alas!" replied he, when she had finished her narrative, "I share in all your fears. It would be cruel as well as wicked to deceive you. There is not, in the four quarters of the globe, a more heartless villain than this Lord Beauchampe. It was but yesterday I heard that his arts had prevailed over the innocence of Ruth Stanley—the daughter of old Colonel Stanley, who, you know, has been living here, on half-pay, the last four years. The aged soldier will now go down broken-hearted to the grave."

"Oh! Charles," cried Bertha, interrupting him, "surely it is not too late to save my sister! If I were only a man——"

"Dearest," he replied, "you will not censure my apparent delay, as I see you do, when you have heard all. I sent, the instant your servant announced Rosa's flight, to learn where my lord had obtained post-horses for his carriage. He will soon be back. Nay! here he comes."

A knock was heard at the door as he spoke, and his groom entered, whispered a few words and retired.

"I have learned the road," he said, "and my own saddle-horse is at the door, with another for my groom. It will be strange if, on my fleet horse, I can not overtake the fugitives, even though they have six hours start."

"God give you success!" cried Bertha, pressing his hand in farewell. "The anxiety will be greater for me, who remain, than for you, who pursue."

In another moment he was gone.

For several hours Vaughan pursued his way, urging his gallant animal to the utmost, and was already feliciating himself on having gained rapidly on the fugitives, when his horse stumbled and injured himself so much that it was found impossible to proceed. We shall not attempt to describe the anguish of the young clergyman in this emergency. Leaving him to his despair, which would have been complete but for his trust in Heaven, let us now follow the fugitives.

The exultation of Lord Beauchampe was at its height when he received, the day before, a note from Rosa, with the laconic words—"I consent." He immediately set about the preparations for his fell plot. He knew that Rosa had been so well brought up, that her ruin could only be effected by a sham ceremony of marriage, and hence his first duty was to despatch his valet, with another accomplice, and a full suit of canonicals, to a spot he designated in a neighboring colony. "By riding hard they can reach there before morning," he said, "and have every thing snugly arranged for us, when we arrive toward evening. The trick, of course, will be discovered soon, but, by that time, this little provincial beauty will be glad to remain mine on any terms." And the abandoned rone chuckled to himself.

True to his calculations, Lord Beauchampe, with Rosa at his side, rattled into the little village of B——, a few minutes after dusk, on the day succeeding the elopement. The flying pair entered the inn, where a parlor had already been hired by the valet, and where a seeming minister, in his robes, waited for them. My lord had desired everything to be kept quiet, but this was impossible in a small country place like B——. The news that a wedding was to take place at the inn; that the priest, as well as the bride and groom, were strangers; and that the happy pair were to come in a chaise and four, a sort of equipage rarely seen in that remote district, had, somehow or other, got abroad: and the consequence was that, when my lord arrived, quite a crowd had collected at the inn door, nor could all the exertions of his valet, or even of the landlord restrain the public curiosity. When Rosa had been supported to the parlor, the spectators, with the rude freedom of a rural district, followed to its entrance, which they blocked up with a sea of faces.

"Is there no way to get rid of these gaping clowns?" said my lord, amazed, addressing mine host.

"I fear not, until the ceremony is over. You see, honored sir," Lord Beauchampe had concealed his rank and name, "that a wedding, by a priest, has never been known in these parts, and all are curious to witness one."

"Ah! then we will go on. Rosa, my dear," he said, turning to the poor girl, who, at this exposure, had drawn down her veil, and sat trembling, "are you ready? If so, we will proceed. My friend here," pointing to the disguised valet, "will give you away."

Whether it was the want of respect shown by the crowd, or the wakening of her conscience within her, Rosa felt, at that moment, as if she would have given worlds to have been back with her sister. She reflected, now for the first time, on the singularity of

her having been brought into another colony, to be married in a country tavern, when there were so many churches, in her own colony, where the ceremony could have been legally performed.

She rose, however, but still trembling. A fearful weight seemed on her heart. It was too late, however to recede, and the ceremony went on.

"Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wife," said the false priest, addressing his accomplice, "to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health; and *forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her*, so long as ye both shall live?"

The ready, but impious affirmative was already trembling on the lips of the deceiver, when a young female, as beautiful as Rosa, but less luxuriously attired, and with her countenance all disordered, rushed forward, and throwing herself at the feet of Lord Beauchampe, clasped his knees, and looked up into his face.

"Oh! my lord," she said, "do not perjure your immortal soul. You swore the same vow to me, *to forsake all others*, and now you have forsaken me. It was a false ceremony you tell me, but the rash vow was none the less heard and registered in Heaven."

But, when she had hurriedly got thus far in her passionate speech, Lord Beauchampe, who at first seemed struck dumb with astonishment, recovered himself, and with an oath spurned her from him. At this the poor creature turned to Rosa, who had stood bewildered, but now began to comprehend the scene.

The eyes of the two young females met. Rosa started in amazement. When last she had seen the fair creature at her knees, it had been at a gay ball, where the two disputed the suffrages of the evening. How changed now was her former rival! Her haggard face, her sunken eyes, the disordered coiffure, made the once gay and happy Ruth Stanley scarcely recognizable. Both females knew each other in the same instant, and each pronounced the other's name.

"Oh! Rosa, have you too fallen a victim to his arts?" cried Ruth. "Just so he deceived me. There was a minister to marry me too, and you see how he now spurns me. He says it was all a deceit—that I am not his wife—that the babe I am to bear him will be the child of shame." And the poor, betrayed, broken-hearted girl broke into hysteric laughter.

Rosa was vain, thoughtless, and wilful, but she was neither wicked nor weak. When once aroused, she had almost the firmness of her sister. She had never heard of Ruth Stanley's ruin, but she could not doubt the truth of it, now when she saw the miserable victim of Lord Beauchampe's perfidy, writhing before her, and beheld consternation pictured in his guilty face. He saw Rose's eyes fixed on him, and rallying himself, advanced to her, saying, "this is some crazed creature, Miss Despencer. She has broke loose from her keepers—"

"Man," said Rosa, sternly, retreating a step, and drawing herself up, while she pointed to the convulsed victim before him, "beware! Touch me not! I thought you a gentleman, but find you a villain. Oh! why did I leave my home? But these good people,

I know, will protect me. As for you, repent, make reparation to her you have wronged, or the vengeance of God will, sooner or later, overtake you."

She spoke like some inspired prophetess, and the profligate quailed before her. Meantime the crowd, which now comprehended the whole story, rushed in, some to protect Rosa, whose proud scorn made all ready to die for her, some to succor Ruth now in violent hysterics, and some to visit summarily on Lord Beauchampe, the vengeance due to his crimes. Fortunately, the casement was close at hand, and the confusion great, so that he as well as his accomplices, managed to escape, and gaining the carriage which still stood with its smoking horses harnessed, fled from the village.

That night Rosa spent a penitent, at the bedside of Ruth. There she learned the whole sad story of the weeping victim, who after her abandonment, in order to hide her shame, had come to this obscure village. With others, she heard of the intended marriage at the inn, and the details were so much like those of her own, that it had awakened her curiosity; she stole out, and saved another from the fate of herself.

"It was the finger of Providence," said Rosa, weeping, and shuddering to think of the gulf she had escaped, "which led the villain here."

Toward morning, Vaughan reached the village, having, after several hours delay, procured a fresh horse. When he learned the almost miraculous escape of Rosa, he lifted his eyes to Heaven, and silently returned thanks. The rescued girl, completely subdued, wept on his shoulder, acknowledging her miserable vanity, and the justice of its punishment.

By this time it was daylight, and a magistrate asked to be admitted. He came to see Vaughan as a friend of Ruth Stanley. His intelligence was as unexpected as it was pleasant. "The villain," he said, "in seeking to outwit his victim, has outwitted himself: for, by the laws of this colony, the performance of the marriage ceremony, in the presence of twelve witnesses, whether intended to be real or not, is a legal and binding marriage, provided one of the parties chooses to consider it so."

It was easy to procure the legal number of witnesses to establish the fact of a ceremony having been performed between Ruth and Lord Beauchampe, which was accordingly done, and thus her name redeemed from disgrace. She never would consent, however, to see her profligate husband. He did not live long, but fell in a duel, with the brother of a lady he had insulted, about a year subsequent to the events of this story. The child of Ruth lived to inherit his estates.

Rosa was entirely cured of the great foible of her character, by these startling events; and soon almost rivalled Bertha in excellence and piety. Several years afterward she married a friend of Vaughan's, who knew all her history, but loved her because he saw her to be no longer the wilful Rosa of other days.

"Oh! Bertha," she would sometimes say, when she and her sister were alone, "I might have been spared the one great mortification of my life, if I had only taken your GENTLE WARNING."

THE GRANDFATHER'S ARM-CHAIR.

BY ANNA BENNETT.

"Sweet is the song of birds,
The lisp of infants and their earliest words."

WE are almost disposed to wish that it was our own arm-chair that has been so usurped by our bright-eyed friend. Indeed we would not disturb her. With such a centre for our thoughts to collect upon, contemplation is far sweeter than to sit down and resume our *dry-as-dust* studies. We look and dream. Little one! suggestive of all the poetry this matter-of-fact world will well admit of, we salute thy presence, and memory sanctifies the scene by re-calling those distant years when all around us was bright and happy. Children, indeed, is the Eden of life. Then, and then only, can man be really pronounced to be good. "For of such is the kingdom of Heaven" is authority, we think, which will not be disputed. In children, by common consent of parents and philosophers, truth and simplicity predominate, whatever other tendencies may be observed to qualify our admiration. The popular ideas of these virtuous principles find readiest exponents in touching allusions to the unconscious guilelessness of infants; and we hold that, although law and order might be inferred from other evidences in being, still the moral relations of truth and justice, in contradistinction to falsehood and selfishness, would have no speaking characters, but for the striking contrasts observed between unsophisticated childhood and dissembling age.

But into what a sermon have we been led! Hamlet's soliloquy over the skull of Yorick is scarcely less moralizing or more seeming wise. The cat appears astonished at our discourse. Poor puss, scratching whilst caressing, hope could not have apter prototype than you. Loudly purring with excess of attachment, of softest fur and most silent step; yet how apt to change the laughing blandishments of childish love

into screams of fear and pain. Even here thy suspicious eye contrastingly tells with the confiding smile of thy young mistress. There is an instinctive philosophy in genius, and the artist has transferred not only the forms, but the very natures of his studies from life.

But wherefore art thou musing, gentle reader? Nay, let us not disturb holy thoughts, but in communion bend over our pictured page. Is it with you, oh! age, we look? Spectacled eyes have been young "Yes, yes, yes. Do we not remember how like, when our eldest girl was young? Grandpapa? No; that her little one says now. Well, how like!" Kindly our hand is on your shoulder, grandpapa. Wait you for the chair, our fairy has made her table. Tottering one, the little "toddling" one loves you. Smiling, she is prepared to vacate her state, that you be seated. But, whilst we write, the aged shade retires. His book and spectacles are there; but, lean and slippery, he has escaped our mental grasp. We have lived not long enough. We have failed to extract a moral from his experience.

Is it the loving mother or the laughing sire whose heart we wish to affect? Look on. It is a familiar scene enough. Domestic hearths are cold where children play not. They make households homes. Many are there of our readers who, in their families, will realize our speaking illustration. To follow their thoughts is unnecessary; and to those who cannot, still, softened emotions must bear testimony to the common humanity which gives interest to it. "One touch of nature makes all mankind of kin;" and awakened sympathies will yield a pleasing reason for the introduction of our subject.

THE IMPENDING MATE.

BY KATE CAMPBELL.

Ros.—“From henceforth I will, coz, and devise sports. Let me see; what think you of falling in love?”
Cel.—“Marry, I pr’ythee, do, to make sport withal: but love no man in good earnest; and no further in sport neither, than with safety of a pure blush thou may’st in honor come off again.”—As You Like It.—ACT I.—SCENE II.

“I WILL not!”

“Will not what?”

“Be sober! Walter has been reading me a lecture.”

“What about, dear child?”

“He says I am too wild—am I? He says I am too forward—am I? He says I exceed many a practised belle in coquetry—do I? Is it not provoking that just now, of all times, Walter should take it into his head to come down from Miltmarth? I wish to goodness he had remained in his hermitage, among his dusty old books and manuscripts!”

“He thought you needed some watch-care, I presume, my dear Nina.”

“Pshaw! that is not it! he is jealous! he cannot bear that I should look at any one else! but he must get over that. I never *will* marry Walter Steinberger, and he need not think it!”

“But your parents, Nina! they wish it so much.”

“So they do, but vainly; why, who ever heard of a girl of fifteen being persecuted to make her choice of a husband? I tell you, Mrs. Morton, I am going to enjoy myself these three years yet: particularly with this party from New York; which between ourselves, dear madam, appears to be a wonderfully stiff and disagreeable one! all the ladies, so silly, simpering, and dressy—and the gentlemen looking bored to death, and thorough dandies, every one of them. Sir Harry Carey is insupportable, and the Hon. Augustus little better. Oh! but I *will* have some merry games.”

“With hearts for stakes, I presume, naughty girl! take care you do not get bitten yourself; you have a singular fancy for all trials of skill.”

“Always had, Mrs. Morton; when I was in the school-room, many a hard rap I received over my knuckles, because my truant fingers were always wandering from the row of ‘sums’ set for me to do, to the much more entertaining pastime of ‘fox and geese!’ and now I am going to adventure a more perilous game.”

“At the risk of getting *more* hard knocks.”

“Not so! I shall not. I always won when a child—I shall do so now!”

“One moment, Nina!” for the girl was running away—“how do you like Carl Ullman?”

“Mr. Ullman? Not at all! he is so stiff, and grave—a regular German—all stolidity and hardness! I wonder by the bye, what has become of all the sterling qualities to which I might be supposed to claim a right? Since my good father is such a regular Hollander, even to the pipe! It is odd, is it not, that I should resemble him so little? But about this Carl Ullman, I do believe I could tolerate him, if he would let me; but he is so like Walter! always looking reproaches at one! (true—Walter does not content himself with *looks*) and besides, he is not at all attentive; pays no regard to those little acts of politeness, which even stupid Sir Harry remembers to perform. No, I do not like him, that is certain! I wonder why father invited him? I don’t believe he is anybody!”

“You are too proud, little Nina! I prophesy that—”

“That what, dear madam? You have such a provoking way of looking unutterable things. I do dislike it so.”

“But in *this* case, I suspect you know what I was going to say?”

“No, I do not!” cried Nina. And “I do not!” she repeated, positively, in reply to the deprecating movement of Mrs. Morton’s head.

And who was Nina? And who was Mrs. Morton, and all the rest?

Do you love the flowing Hudson, dear reader? Then step back with me in your imagination, some century more or less, and stand with me upon the banks of that noble river. Or, if chary of that trouble, you have merely to say, as the magnetizers to a *clairvoyant*—“tell me what you see now?”

Very well then—I see a beautiful picture; with a bright world of floating sunshine, and purple haze, and trailing flowers for the foreground, and back from

the verge of the glorious water, a fine, old dwelling in the English style, with low windows opening out on pleasant balconies, supported by lofty pillars, and guarded by a balustrade of gray granite. Within, the rooms are furnished richly, though quaintly, with the carved and massive furniture so much in vogue at that time; and sitting or standing about in little groups, are many gaily dressed people, whose costume is varied and striking; often elegant. Ladies with their luxuriant locks, thickly powdered, and drawn off their temples in puffs or formal curls; and gentleman with their smart, three-cornered chapeaux, usurping, for the time, the privileges of the fairer sex, and wearing their hair long and waving on their shoulders; not always depending on nature either for the length and profusion of their perukes, but borrowing from art all that the sensible dame refused to grant them. Then their pumps, silk stockings, and small clothes; with coats of a nondescript form, which would put the brain of a modern tailor to confusion.

And this picture which we have seen, which we have endeavored to describe, was the home in those days of Wilhelm Van Arden—a Hollander by descent, who wedded a fair daughter of old England; and because her blue eyes flashed, and her red lip curled when he spoke of sitting down in the smoke-stained halls of his Manhattan ancestors, purchased this beautiful spot, and forsaking the associations of his youth, devoted himself with untiring and assiduous affection to his beautiful bride.

There were many among the English residents of New York, who wondered much that one of their proud maidens should wed one defiled with trade; but love is wilful, and a woman *more* so; and when once Annie Courtland had plighted her troth to Wilhelm Van Arden, there was no withdrawal, for she possessed too keen a relish for happiness to sacrifice it to vanity.

Mrs. Van Arden's position in society was too well assured for her to lose it by what many termed a *mesalliance*; so her beautiful residence was always filled with agreeable and refined society, and when as years glided on, a daughter was added to their cares, the Van Ardens called themselves, and with truth, supremely happy.

This daughter was the wilful Nina, who has been introduced to our readers already; a born coquette! Not that cruel, hard-hearted creature, usually characterized by that much abused, and oft misapplied word, but one of those arch, dazzling, saucily demure beings, who sometimes flit across our pathway, and who can no more help giving out bright looks, gay smiles and winsome gestures, than they can help believing this world a Paradise, in spite of all the hard things said against it—who breathe a perpetual sunshine, and know only an experience of happiness. Such was Nina—now just escaped from the school-room, and eager to make her first essay in life. Her father's house was as usual filled with company, for the season was summer, and to Nina, at least, its warm and spicy breeze spoke only of joy and pleasure.

Mrs. Morton, an old friend of her mother's, was Nina's chosen adviser and confidant, and Walter, whom Nina declared so positively she would not marry, was a bachelor—a cousin of Mr. Van Arden's,

whose wealth was immense, but who lived, as the girl said, like a hermit; caring for nothing, save the family in which he was quite domesticated, and loving Nina particularly, with a strange, crusty sort of affection, which converted all his words (which certainly sprang from a kind heart) into stern rebukes. Nina was fond of the grave man, who was old enough to be her father; but her parents had said she was to wed him, and Walter smiled a sort of grim satisfaction, which awoke in the young lady's breast a sudden resolution to make this scheme harder in *fulfilment* than they had anticipated. Walter made a very good mentor, and she loved dearly to read German with him, but the book of wedded life presented itself to her as a fairy-hued and rainbow-tinted volume, and she was sure Walter could not furnish it forth in *that* style.

Meanwhile her parents did not press their wishes, for she was their only, and their darling child; and young enough besides to enjoy herself for some time yet before taking the final step in life.

"What shall we do?" Nina said, wearily, one soft July night, when the moon was out full, and flooding the broad piazza with its sheets of molten silver; idealizing the several couples who paced slowly to and fro, or lingered listlessly beside the vine-wreathed pillars.

"Yes—what shall we do?" was echoed by various voices. "Such a glorious night should not be lost, but be marked by something to recall it in *after* times."

"Does not the night furnish forth enjoyment of itself?" said the grave voice of Carl Ullman. And Nina started to find herself addressed by one who always kept aloof.

"The night!—the night!" she said, hurriedly, "oh, yes! it is beautiful! but I want *more*, *more*!" clasping her hands, and raising those dark eyes usually so light and laughing, but now dreamy and troubled.

"More?" Carl Ullman repeated, earnestly. "And is it possible that you too are discontented, when life holds out a cup so rich and brimming?"

"Oh, no—no!" replied the girl. "I am always happy! I scarce *ever* have sad feelings; but on such a night, oh—I have *thoughts*—so strange, so aspiring. I am happy, and yet oppressed with wild longings—longings to be up there, in the starry sky, where the *angels* are, and—"

"But their *whisperings* are here!" murmured Carl Ullman, tenderly, while his eyes grew large and luminous, conveying to the startled girl a thought of infinite love. Re-called to earth, she blushed deeply, yet indignantly, and hastily withdrew.

She stood at the other end of the piazza, and talked gaily to Sir Harry Carey, and the "Hon. Augustus."

"What is the matter, Nina?" said Walter Steinberger, abruptly.

"Why?" said the girl.

"You look angry—flushed—agitated."

"Nonsense, Walter! your eyes are strangely at fault. You should wear glasses! how tiresome to be watched continually," she added, pettishly.

"Miss Nina should arrest you for treason," drawled forth the Hon. Augustus. "I will venture to say she knows not the meaning of the word anger. Her

countenance is placid as the moonlight; her eyes bright as the stars; her cheeks damask as this rose, which I flatter myself she will allow me to place in her hair."

Nina's lips curled contemptuously; then they parted archly, and with downcast, drooping eyes, she submitted coquettishly, while the gentleman awkwardly arranged the flower in her rich, dark curls.

"Now bring me my guitar, and I will sing," she said. "No—not you, Mr. Trevor; Sir Harry, this time!" and as the gentleman started, and strove to spring lightly to her bidding, (Sir Harry was heavy and gouty) a scarce restrained smile trembled on her red lip, while her laughing eyes wandered round the circle.

"Nina!" said Walter, severely.

"Ah, forgive me, good Walter! but I have not *done* anything, have I?" she asked, demurely, her long lashes drooping to her cheek, as only lashes such as hers *can* droop.

"Nina," said Walter, again, when she had finished singing, alluding to the sentiment of the song; "some day you will find that earth is *not* Heaven enough for you:—that there are other aims than those so falsely described in that mawkish song."

"Sing me a better one!" cried Nina, saucily, more piqued than she cared to confess at Walter's constant interference, and scarcely conscious of what she was doing, she took the offered arm of a gentleman, and strolled away through the damp grass.

"Nina! what are you doing? Come back immediately!" and "Mr. Lindsay, please bring that crazy girl back!" were exclamations sent after them by Walter Steinberger and Mrs. Van Arden; but affecting not to hear, the wilful maiden redoubled her pace, looking upon the gentleman's face, and smiling mischievously; as much as to say, "you will do no such thing!" and Mr. Lindsay was too well pleased, perhaps, to disobey her tacit command.

Nina threw herself triumphantly upon a rustic seat, twined with the fragrant woodbine, and employed herself in stripping the dewy flowers from their resting-place, while Mr. Lindsay brought a stone for a footstool; but not till the delicate slippers which covered her feet were wet through with the damp. She held them out laughingly for inspection, remarking—

"I wonder what cross old Walter would say now?" and started to find her hand taken abruptly by the object of her thoughts, and herself led like a naughty child, with whom it is folly to reason, back to the house.

"Why, Walter! I *will* not go!" struggling to free herself. "There—I have dropped my flowers! *Walter!*—how horrible you are!" and the—"I declare I will tell papa," which fell from her pouting lips as she reached the steps, sounded so child-like that the girl herself joined in the laugh it had provoked, and contented herself with shaking her finger at the "cross, old Walter," who seated himself gravely and silently beside Mrs. Van Arden.

"I sent him for you, love," she said, anxiously. "You forget the water party to Milmarth to-morrow. You could not go if you were to take cold, and you are hoarse now. Go to bed, dear child."

"*Alas!*" cried the girl, ruefully, laughing, however, and shrugging her shoulders; "have I or have I *not* escaped from the nursery yet? To be sent to bed used to be the climax of my childish punishments; must I take it so now?" she asked, as she pressed her good-night kiss upon her fond mother's cheek.

"*Am* I so very hoarse, Mrs. Morton?" Nina asked, the next morning, when all around were busied with their preparations for the excursion to Milmarth, looking wistfully as she spoke at the beautiful barge at the river side, with its foreign looking prow, and gay colored streamers fluttering on the breeze.

"Rather *hoarse*, my dear! why do you ask?"

"Mamma says I cannot go; she is afraid I will take more cold. I wish I had not gone on the grass last night!"

"Ah, my dear! you see how wrong it is to be so wilful. If you had minded what Walter said to you—"

"Minded Walter, Mrs. Morton! Pshaw! I believe you and Walter are in league to torment me!"

"Far from it, my dear; on the contrary, I like somebody else a great deal better; and my most ardent desire is, that you may come to like one another."

"Nonsense!" said the girl, coloring. "I know who you mean now! Carl Ullman. I see you holding long consultations together. I cannot bear him. But what in the world is one to do with oneself, I wonder?" she continued, impatiently, turning away. "If it wasn't for Walter I wouldn't care a straw about going; only it is so provoking to hear his, 'I told you so!'" and she ran hastily away to hide herself till they should have departed.

When the solitude of her own room grew irksome to the lively maiden, she wandered down to the drawing-room, and opening the door, was surprised to find it already occupied.

"Mr. Ullman!" she exclaimed, graciously, glad to meet any one, she cared not whom. "Mr. Ullman! you here? How!—why did you not go?"

"I had some letters to answer to-day," he replied, rising, and placing a seat for her; but she continued standing, and with her arms leaning on the back of the chair, repeated—

"Letters to write?"

"Yes—to my parents."

"Are they far away?"

"In Germany," he said, smiling.

"How impertinent in me to ask questions," she said, laughing, "of *you* at least! but why did you leave them?"

"For a reason which cannot claim the merit of novelty—a wish to see the New World."

"And do you like America?"

"Very much indeed—and Americans *more*," he said, pointedly.

"Pshaw!—do you mean to stay here always?"

"I intend returning very soon."

"Once more!" said Nina, with a ringing laugh. "You answer like a book. Why do you return so soon if you like America?"

"My parents are old and infirm;—is it not my duty to return?"

She did not answer him directly, but said childishly, "Isn't duty a tiresome thing?"

"Do you think so?"

"I asked you! but you give me back question for question. I told you what I thought, so let duty alone to-day; to-morrow will answer as well for your letters; now, you must do something to amuse me! Sing for me: I know you can: all Germans sing or play. And let it be in your own language: I can understand you tolerably well, I dare say, for Walter makes me read German with him, all through the winter."

And the gentleman sang; and Nina listened till the tears came in her eyes; then she pulled the guitar away from him, and said impatiently—

"Everything makes me cry to-day. I have had two crying spells already—you must do something else. Can you play chess?"

Carl Ullman could play chess also, and Nina made him get out the board, and arrange the pieces upon it, and place it on a small stand in the piazza, where it was cool and pleasant, and then she said gaily—

"You shall not make me cry now!"

"Perhaps you may make me!"

"You! what an idea. I should like to see a man cry!"

"Did you never?"

"No—never. But come, let us begin. I warn you, I am a first-rate player; I always win."

"I believe you," the gentleman said, and his words conveyed a double meaning, and his eyes spoke a language which might have deterred the girl from trying her skill had she understood it.

As the game progressed, Nina found that she had a skilful opponent, and she bent all of thought that giddy brain possessed upon the board before her.

Several times her king was in imminent peril, and as piece after piece was quietly taken from her, she grew nervous and vexed, she scarce knew why. How foolish to be frightened because in danger of losing the game! She pushed back the hair from her open brow, and rested her hand thoughtfully upon the board. She must move cautiously *this* time. Had she looked up, she would have seen that the gentleman's thoughts were on anything but the game *now*, so sadly, so watchfully he regarded *her*.

"Nina," he said, as the girl made another move, and an advantageous one, and uttered a low, joyous laugh, "Nina!" and he rose abruptly, and came round beside her.

"The game, the game! let us finish the game!" the girl said, impatiently, unconscious of his object.

"Yes—let us finish the game," he repeated, with strange earnestness, and just as he had sung, with the deepest feeling he poured forth a passionate declaration.

As the girl listened to the first love-tale she had ever heard, she too turned away from the board, and grew very pale and trembling. She wanted to cover her eyes, which were drawn irresistibly to his, but her hands lay listlessly in her lap, and she had no power to move them, or withdraw them from his when he took them.

She did not want to be cold, for he seemed to read the hopelessness of his suit in her look, but somehow, she knew, she *felt* the lines of her face harden and grow rigid; that sweet, mobile face, which was ever breaking into smiles and dimples; and her eyes seemed stony in their sockets, and the one monosyllable which came from her lips, by no will of her own, frightened her. It sounded so brief—so hoarse—so decided. What ailed her? And she reeled in her seat, as her small hands were relinquished abruptly, and a white, shivering face was placed close to her own, and then vanished from before her.

The noonday sun was streaming over the piazza when Nina raised her eyes, and passed her hands across her seared brow, and strove to recollect all that had passed. The chess-board still stood there, and a vacant chair drawn close to the small stand, but Carl Ullman? He was gone, and once again Nina wept bitterly, remembering as she did so every word to which she had given utterance, while they were talking together; and she murmured—"he *has* made me cry again, after all."

And then she wondered why she had said *no*, and chided herself for wondering as she did so, and asked herself if she really did not love him, what made her feel so sadly now? She had never thought about such a contingency, and the words or *word* she had spoken seemed placed in her mouth by some strange, foreign power. It was all like a dream—a very sad, wild, troubled dream. She would sleep and forget it, and be herself again. "Only," she murmured, as she rose, and glanced again at the board, "it is not finished yet—the game is pending still. It is an omen—an omen!" and the noon breezes as they rustled by through the tall pillars, repeated her words like an echo—"an omen!—an omen!"

WOMAN'S INFLUENCE.

BY LUKE DERWIN.

Yes, she was beautiful! for her eyes glanced gaily from beneath their long, silken lashes, and her expressive face glowed with pleasant excitement as she took her place among the dancers; and when the low, sweet music came floating through the room, and the tiny feet moved with so light a fall to its soul-thrilling sound, she seemed almost a being from a purer world.

"A very angel!" exclaimed Frank Manden, in a feeling tone.

"Take care, Frank—take care!" said I, shaking my head as he looked up into my face; and then seating myself by his side, I continued—"an angel in appearance truly, but a woman, I fear, with no very angelic heart."

"Yes, she is wild, I know," replied my friend, in a doubtful tone, "but then if her fair bosom should become the possessor of a holy love, do you not think that she would give up her gaiety to please her husband?"

"Oh, yes," said he, growing warm with his subject, "I know she would be all a woman could be, for so fair a form cannot contain an unfeeling heart. Happy, happy is that man who may possess so lovely a prize!"

"Why, Frank, you are really captivated!" I exclaimed, in answer to this burst of feeling. "But, seriously, I do not think so wild and thoughtless a girl as Alice Carey would make a good wife for my good-hearted, but sober-minded friend, Frank Manden."

I thought a shade of melancholy passed over the fine face of the young man as I uttered the last words, and I continued—"but this is no place to discuss the character of a leading belle like Miss Carey, but if you will walk into the conservatory with me we will discuss her merits at our leisure."

With a fond glance at the beautiful face of Alice, and a half-suppressed sigh he took my arm, and we walked away.

Long and seriously did we converse upon the subject, for I loved my friend, and felt that I was but doing him a kindness when I advised him not to throw away the rich love of his manly heart upon so worldly-minded a woman as I knew Alice to be.

I told him all; her distaste for home and domestic enjoyment; her love of company and gaiety; that her mother had never trained her to be a *wife*; that her love was all splendor and fashion, and not for the quiet happiness of the domestic circle; that she was beautiful only in appearance; and that beneath there was no substantial goodness. But it was in vain; woman's influence was stronger than all I could say: stronger than the bonds of the friendship which bound us together. He said I must be misinformed: at any rate he would enjoy her society, study her character,

and if he found her to be what I represented, he would break the spell and leave her forever.

"It will be too late, Frank! too late before you will find her out," I exclaimed, feelingly: "too late to repent: too late for your own happiness. Oh! do not run so great a risk! You love her now, and believe me, blinded by prejudice as you are, you will be no very discerning judge of her character. Your wealth, your position in society, your future prospects, and your high connections, will all be too high a prize for Miss Carey to think of losing by a display of her real sentiments. Oh! break the chain, and do not—do not be entrapped by so beautiful an exterior."

I had spoken hastily, too warmly for my own object, for my friend rose from his seat, and coldly saying—"that he hoped Mr. Derwin would allow him to choose his own society," walked away. I looked upon his retiring form with a sad heart, for I knew that with all his youthful dreams of a loving wife and a quiet home, he could never be happy with one whose greatest pleasure was in fashion and show. And as I sat thus regretting his departure, and feeling that I had said all that I could say, I thought of woman and her influence, and mourned that it was not *always* upon the side of morality and religion. Hers is indeed a responsible situation, and whether she fits it or not, she is more or less the moulder of the character of the young with whom she is associated. The actions of young men are ever in a great degree directed by the females of their acquaintance, and their whole life is often changed by the unseen, yet irresistible power of woman's direction.

While musing thus, I was suddenly aroused by the sound of approaching footsteps, and I had hardly time to dispense with my thoughtful attitude, when I was accosted with—

"Well, Luke, you are the veriest dealer in old remembrances of the past, and doleful musings on the future that it has ever been my fortune to meet. Here you are alone by yourself, thinking and caring for nought else, when the most enticing music is sweetly sounding in your ears, and a score of smiling faces and laughing eyes are no doubt languishing for your presence in the next room."

Expressing some doubts of "smiling faces and laughing eyes languishing," I arose from my seat and followed the inconsiderate young man, who seemed to have no thought or care but for the frivolities and pleasures of the world. As I entered the ball-room, I hastily glanced over the brilliant throng, and soon detected Frank in earnest conversation with Alice Carey. With a sigh I turned my eyes away, and beheld at my side *one* whom to meet is always pleasure. She accosted me with a smile, and a very earnest entreaty that I would disclose the secret grief which

called forth such an expression of sadness. I felt in no secret-keeping mood, and thought I would rather give vent to my feelings than to stifle them in my own bosom, so I pointed out to her the before named couple, and told her that *there* was enough to call forth at least one sigh from the young man's friend. A mournful expression rested for a moment upon her face as she looked in the direction indicated, and then with a smile she turned to me, and said—"yes, but there is a pleasant sight."

I looked and beheld seated upon the sofa a young girl, whose sweet face and fairy form seemed only the more pleasing from the simple white dress in which she was clothed. Her countenance was lighted up with an expression of deep feeling, and in her dark eyes there must have been a strange power, for the gay young man whom I have before mentioned seemed to listen with the most eager attention to her words.

"And what of that?" said I, to my companion. "The young lady is certainly very pretty."

"Yes, and as good as she is pretty," she replied, "and if she exerts her wondrous power upon Thomas Felton, I doubt not she will make even him, as wild and thoughtless as he is, as steady and home-hearted as the man at my side."

With thanks for the compliment, I entreated her for the story.

"Oh! no great story," she returned, "only the young lady is one of the very best females with whom it is my pleasure to be acquainted. She is the daughter of pious parents, and has been taught that she is to be a *woman*; and has a duty to perform in the world. She is all that a refined Christian education can make her, and I doubt not that if she loves Thomas, and I think she does, she will by her moulding influence lead him from follies path into the less showy, but more pleasing walks of domestic happiness."

"I hope so," I replied, "for he is in the main a good-hearted fellow, and only needs to give up his frivolity and lightness to make him one of the best of men." But I continued as my mind reverted to Frank Manden—"I fear Miss Carey will lead Frank far away from the useful, happy situation which he has heretofore occupied, and make him as wild as herself. Truly, he is the last person whom I would have believed she could so easily have ruined."

"Luke! Luke! you speak harshly," returned my companion, reproachfully. "Surely Alice is not as bad as you would intimate."

"Would she were not," I exclaimed. But others gathered near, and our conversation was for the time interrupted.

Time passed on, and thoughts of the future prospects of the young men I have mentioned were often in my mind.

At every party I attended my first glances were in search of Frank and Thomas, and each meeting only served to show that I was right in my first impressions of the impossibility of Frank's resisting the soft glances and bewitching smiles of Alice Carey. A marked difference too was observable in his general demeanor. His usual quiet habits seemed to be entirely changed, and he appeared to be perfectly

infatuated with the pleasures and follies of fashionable society. His bow was too distant, and his "good day, sir," too formal for me to make any further attempt to reason with him upon his conduct, and I was reluctantly compelled to watch the slow, but sure progress of his attachment.

As I was sitting one evening at one of the fashionable soirees of the wealthy Mrs. —, I observed just beyond me seated alone Thomas Felton. I arose and approaching, rallied him upon his unusually sedate and serious aspect. He shook his head, while a pleasing smile stole over his fine features, and replied—

"Well, Luke! I have learned a lesson lately, and I hope to profit by it. Old remembrances are pleasant sometimes, and I often love to indulge in musings upon the future," and saying this, he slipped a small, fancy note into my hand, and walked away. I opened it and found two cards. The reader can guess the rest. I attended the wedding, and as I saw him lead his blushing bride to the altar, and beheld the proud, fond look with which he gazed upon her as she promised to be his own, I lifted my heart to God in thankfulness for woman's influence.

Business called me away, and for six months I was absent from my home. Upon my return, while looking over my file of "Neal," which had accumulated during my absence, my eye rested upon the following:

"Married, on the sixth instant, by the Rev. —, Mr. Francis C. Manden, to Miss Alice D., daughter of Henry B. Carey, Esq., all of —."

I laid down my papers, and leaving my breakfast untasted, walked out into the street. From the date I concluded that they had been married only a few weeks after my departure, and I doubted not that by this time Frank had obtained some insight into the real character of his wife. Musing upon our former friendship, and wondering if the memory of my warning ever came to his mind, I walked slowly along until I was aroused by, "how do you do, Luke!" spoken in a warm, friendly tone. Looking up I beheld Thomas Felton, and after I had returned his warm greeting, he insisted upon my breakfasting with him.

"But," said I, "Mrs. Felton will not expect a visitor this morning, and—"

"That is the very reason I want you to go," interrupted Thomas—"I want you to see what a jewel of a wife I have got."

Smiling at his enthusiasm I gave my consent, and we soon reached his retired, but beautiful dwelling. Upon our entrance, Mrs. Felton immediately welcomed me so heartily that all fears of my being a disagreeable visitor were speedily dissipated.

While we were breakfasting, Thomas occupied the time in plainly telling me the arrangements they had made for the future. Said he, "the control of the house I have given over to my wife, and I never interfere with or disturb her arrangements. Out-of-doors she willingly yields to my wishes, and about all things we consult together. Thus we live peacefully, contentedly and happy. Oh!" said he, warmly, "for all my happiness I thank my wife. It was her gentle influence that first led me to think; it was her smile that won me to the sweet delights of a quiet and useful

life; it is her presence that makes my home happy; and it is by means of her warnings and her solicitations that I am now a *Christian* man ”

And when our repast was concluded, and Mrs. Felton, with a holy smile upon her face, laid the Bible in her husband's hands, I thought how great, for evil or for good, is woman's influence. I trust I left that happy home a better man !

As I walked toward my place of business, I suddenly upon turning a corner encountered Frank. His face was care-worn, and bore a striking contrast to the calm and undisturbed look which it usually presented when we were friends together.

As soon as he saw me he grasped my hand, turned away his face to hide the tear which glistened in his eye, and with a quivering voice exclaimed—“forgive me, Luke! I have wronged you, but it is too late!

just as you said, too late! I never can be happy!—I never can be happy!”

Taking his arm, I walked with him to his room, where he told me all: how he had begged of her by all the love he bore her, by all his hopes of domestic bliss, by all their expectations of future happiness to be the loved companion of his home; “but,” said he, “home finds no echo in her bosom; she cares only for fashion and show. Gone are all my bright visions of a loving wife, a cheerful fireside, and a happy home, which I so fondly cherished! Yes, they are gone—all gone! Oh!” continued he, “if she only loved me as I love her, the sweet retirement of home would be for us the greatest of earth's blessings! But it is too late!—too late!”

With a load of sorrow weighing upon my own heart I left him, thinking how much of happiness or misery depends upon woman's influence.